

# THE SATURDAY REVIEW

## OF

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#### CHRONICLE.

**M**R. LABOUCHERE used plain language at Swansea last week. Whatever objections may be made to his style of speaking so far as elegance of phrase is concerned, there can be no mistake as to his meaning. He strongly disapproves of the Ministerial reticence about the terms of the Resolution to be passed by the House of Commons. The Radicals, it seems, object to any reform of the Upper House. They see no advantage in the Referendum, nor in a Committee of representatives from both Houses to decide disputed points. Unlike Lord ROSEBERY, Mr. LABOUCHERE is in favour of a single Chamber. "All questions are 'thoroughly threshed out in the country before they 'ever reach the Commons." So "it is perfect non-sense to talk of bridling the reckless speed of that 'House." The House of Lords and the House of Commons cannot exist side by side, unless the former is deprived of its veto or swamped by the creation of Liberal peers. In conclusion, Mr. LABOUCHERE insisted that the Resolution should be "stalwart, clear, and distinct," if the Government hoped to win the next election.

Nor were Messrs. WOODS, BURNS, and BROADHURST less uncompromising in their interview with Lord ROSEBERY on Tuesday. The Labour party have the effrontery to expect from the Government a fulfilment of their promises. Mr. SAMUEL WOODS, unlike that meek humourist, Sir WILFRID LAWSON, declines to be put off with the plea that the Government have too much legislation on their hands already. Home Rule and Disestablishment and the Abolition of the Lords are well enough in their way, but payment of members holds the chief place in the programme of the Labour representatives. The memory of the PREMIER, who seemed to be ignorant of Sir WILLIAM HARROUD's promise to bring in a measure for the payment of members next Session, had to be refreshed on that point somewhat sharply, and an amusing attempt was made to estimate the money value of a member of Parliament. It was provisionally fixed by Mr. BROADHURST at 300L a year; which means that a sum exceeding 200,000L a year will have to be raised to defray the expenses of our Parliamentary representatives. Taxpayers are also presently to be saddled with the official election expenses. But really, when a man is taking money out of his neighbour's pocket, there is no reason why he should stop at any particular stage of the proceeding.

Lord ROSEBERY can scarcely be congratulated on a successful week. What with the very awkward defeat

in Forfarshire, which the adherents of the Government cannot quite welcome, and the not altogether friendly attitude of the Radicals and Labour party, he is deserving of all pity. When, too, in his letter to the *Times* of last Saturday he confessed to having made a "slip" in stating that the New Zealand Government had no wish to administer Samoa, his "pleasure" in "readily admitting the fact" can hardly have amounted to rapture.

It appears from Mr. WILLIAM O'BRIEN's oration at Cork last Saturday that there never was "a more blessed prospect of re-establishing complete national 'unity' with the object of co-operation "against the hereditary enemies of Ireland" than at the present moment. If the Irish would, indeed, "cordially co-operate" for any purpose whatsoever, we might believe in the "blessed prospect." But in this very speech, the prelude of which was so promising, Mr. O'BRIEN went on to say that he was "not speaking, 'of course, of the half-dozen Dublin politicians who 'follow in Mr. JOHN REDMOND'S wake, who have committed themselves to a hopeless and impossible 'policy." After which followed abuse of Mr. REDMOND, which he repeated in his Monday's speech. For the rest, he dished up the old *crambe repetita* about "the 'last and only obstacle to the obtaining of a Home 'Rule Parliament" being "the hostility of the House 'of Lords." We cannot expect Mr. O'BRIEN to be accurate in his statements—that would be clipping the wings of his imagination—but his statement that "the 'elected representatives of the British people are with 'us" does not exactly dazzle the mind as a new and brilliant truth.

On Monday Mr. O'BRIEN deviated into the wilds of Irish history, taking as his subject "France as an ally of Ireland." Irish rhetoricians seem to delight more in suggestions of danger than in its actual presence. Mr. O'BRIEN treated his audience to a glorification of the military prowess of the Irishmen in the service of Continental armies; FONTENOY was, of course, paraded; SARSFIELD was belauded and English perfidy commented on. The sympathy existing between France and Ireland in the past was significantly alluded to. But in spite of all his grandiloquence we cannot somehow imagine Mr. O'BRIEN figuring as the subject of a volume in any future "Heroes of the Nations" series. Great men are made of sterner stuff than is the gentleman who caused the *welkin* to resound with lamentations when his nether garments were abstracted.

M. JULES ROCHE, in his report on the French War Budget, points out that, from 1887 to 1891, the annual German Budget has exceeded the French by sums varying between 1,000,000l. and 6,000,000l. From 1891 to the present date the French expenditure has actually decreased 3,000,000l., whilst the German has again increased. The number of men with the colours provided for in 1895 is only 411,700, when the African troops are deducted, which total is less by 129,000 men than the German. With a diminishing population, the numerical inferiority of the French will soon be much greater.

By the death of M. MAGNARD, the editor of the *Figaro*, France has lost one of her most notable men. Under his editorship the *Figaro* reached a degree of prosperity unexampled in the history of French journalism.

In a letter to the *Times* of Tuesday Mr. G. J. SYMONS gives figures showing that the heavy rainfall between October 20 and November 14 of this year was characterized by "persistency rather than intensity." The November floods of 1852 and the October floods of 1865 and 1875 throw our contemporary deluge into the shade. But still we can boast that "over the South of England it rained at nearly every station "nearly every day for more than three weeks, and "finished (at any rate for a time) with approximately "an inch a day for four consecutive days." Nor is it certain that we have not beaten the 1875 record for October and November. "I am not sure," says Mr. SYMONS, "that there was any period of three weeks or "so with a rainfall over the whole of the South of "England equal to the recent fall."

There has been, to use the language of the telegrams, "sharp fighting" on the Tana River, in the British Protectorate of Witu. The Somalis are said to have been plundering and murdering in the British Sphere of influence, and to have killed several Wapokoma, a tribe under our protection. Our forces, consisting of five Europeans and twenty-four natives, fired upon a body of about two hundred Somalis from the opposite bank of the Tana, and killed or wounded between twelve and forty of the enemy "in seven minutes." The Somalis were harassed in their retreat by the poisoned arrows of the Wapokoma, "and will probably be caught and "exterminated by a force of Nubian troops, under "Captain ROGERS, Administrator of Witu." If this is "sharp fighting," what is ordinary fighting? The whole affair reads disgustingly like a battue.

Londoners who delight in the crisp watercress as an accompaniment of the breakfast and tea table may be surprised, and possibly disgusted, to hear that the cress in question is largely grown on sewage-farms. There is also a serious danger involved in eating this cress. According to Dr. VERDON, the Medical Officer of Health for Lambeth, its consumption may be traced as the cause of several recent outbreaks of typhoid fever. The water which percolates the sectional beds he found to possess "all the chemical characteristics "of liquid sewage," and by means of the microscope he discovered in it innumerable colonies of bacteria.

Who shall say that romance is dead? Last week a hundred brigands made a descent upon the little town of Tortoli, in Sardinia. The garrison of Tortoli mustered precisely three soldiers, all told. The townspeople, however, imprudently lent their assistance, with the result that there was "a gallant resistance," and three valuable lives were lost, whilst twenty or thirty persons were wounded. The report runs that the brigands carried off 8,000l. worth of booty; but it is difficult to believe that a small township in Sardinia can boast of so much portable property. The *dénouement*

would read well in a shilling shocker. One of the brigands died as they were retiring with the plunder. Whereupon a comrade cut off his head and took it away with him, in order to prevent identification. Since then arrests have been made, and the whole affair is being degraded to the level of reality.

"The Secret of Long Life" is the subject of an interesting article in the *British Medical Journal*. M. FERDINAND DE LESSERS attributes his vigorous health in his eighty-fourth year "in a large measure" to "daily exercise on horseback." CARLYLE, too, was much given to riding. Major KNOX HOLMES pinned his faith on tricycles. Equality of temperature was the panacea of OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES. M. BARTHÉLÉMY SAINT-HILAIRE believes in rising and retiring to rest early, with regular, steady work during the daytime. Mr. GLADSTONE is said to attribute his longevity to his daily walk in all weathers and his thirty-two bites allotted to every morsel of food. An American octogenarian, M. VAN DER WEYDE, proclaims "the study "and practice of music" to be the elixir. But is it not a little remarkable that many of the great modern composers died before they reached the half-century? All old folk are wont to attribute their long lives to abstinences of some kind, and no doubt the intensity of their faith in a certain special treatment of themselves not only proceeds from an innate law of their being, but also reacts most beneficially upon their physical condition. Like children they cannot believe in their mortality. The conclusion of the whole matter is, that in order to live long one must enjoy a sound constitution and take heed not to strain it. In fact, we must make a careful selection of our ancestors, as HEINE summarized it years ago.

In an important article on the alleged increase of infant mortality in England, the *Lancet* remarks that this conclusion appears to be mainly based on the returns for 1893—a year exceptionally fatal owing to the high temperature and deficient rainfall. The infant death-rate has been exceptionally low in the present year. Between 1851–1860 and 1861–1870 the mortality was 154 per 1,000; between 1871–1880 it fell to 149 per 1,000, and between 1881–1890 it further decreased to 142 per 1,000. Thus, over a period of thirty years the rate of infant mortality in England steadily declined, notwithstanding constant fluctuations, owing chiefly to variations of summer temperature. In 1893 the death-rate was as exceptionally high as it has been exceptionally low in 1894. Hence it is that the mean rate for 1891–93 exceeds the mean rate for 1881–90. But the assertion that there has been a recrudescence of infant mortality is premature. That artificial food, substituted for mother's milk, is the cause of the death of many infants is indisputable; but the *Lancet* agrees with Mr. ASQUITH in doubting whether any existing statistics go to show that the mortality is due to the employment of married women in factories. Some of the towns in which the death-rate is highest are not manufacturing towns, or towns in which women are much employed in factories. Charing and laundry work, which are as much accountable for artificial feeding as factory work, are equally detrimental to infant life. Furthermore, the excess in the death-rates in certain manufacturing towns is almost as large among children and adults as it is among infants. "This fact points to general sanitary causes, "which affect all ages, rather than to the employment "of married women as the chief cause of the excess "of infant mortality. While, however, we admit and "deplore this excess, we demur to the assertion of "general increase in the rate of infant mortality in "England."

## MR. ASQUITH AS A RADICAL.

MR. ASQUITH'S speech in Birmingham was not only an exceedingly able speech, but also one of the greatest importance to the student of politics. For Mr. ASQUITH is a man not only of great talent, but also a man of great strength of character. It will be in the memory of all that when Mr. ASQUITH was pressed by the Irish party to exercise the prerogative of mercy, and to release the gentlemen known as the Birmingham dynamiters, he refused peremptorily, thus showing a disdain for popularity and a moral strength that roused the House of Commons to cheers. Mr. ASQUITH does not take up a position lightly or change his ground without pressure of good reason, or of that necessity which constitutes the best of reasons. We must, therefore, take him seriously when he declares himself, as he did on Wednesday last, to be in favour of ending, and not of mending, the House of Lords. After laughing at the tinkering proposed by his leader, Lord ROSEBERY, he used the following words :—“I will say nothing but this about these proposed changes in the composition of the House of Lords. If the House of Lords is to maintain its present functions, they are changes to which you and I can never assent. We are not going to see the creation, with a fresh mandate of popular authority, of a new and more formidable and irresponsible power in this country.”

These words are taken from the *Times*' report, and mean, if they mean anything, that we must now count Mr. ASQUITH as being against a Second Chamber, as belonging to the advanced Democratic wing; and the time and circumstances add to the importance of this declaration of policy on the part of the HOME SECRETARY. For some weeks he has been away from the atmosphere of the House of Commons, and has been in touch with his constituents, and his party has just lost a seemingly safe seat in Forfarshire on this very cry; yet Mr. ASQUITH chooses this moment to gibe at his leader's Conservatism, and to take his stand among the most stalwart Radicals. What does this mean? The last General Election proves conclusively that neither party in the country is enthusiastically in favour of the party programme. The bye-elections that have taken place since tell the same tale. The Liberal loss in Forfarshire in November can be set off against the reduced Tory majority at Birkenhead in October. With a lukewarm party it is generally supposed to be politic for Ministers to display all the Conservatism they possess. Why, then, does Mr. ASQUITH choose this moment to display his Radicalism? Let us put ourselves in Mr. ASQUITH's place, and consider what will be the state of affairs when Lord ROSEBERY's Resolution abolishing the veto of the House of Lords is submitted to the House of Commons in the next Session of Parliament. First of all, this Resolution will unite the Liberal party. Every Liberal in the House will vote for it; but, while voting for it, it is an open secret that the Radical leaders, Mr. STOREY, Sir CHARLES DILKE, and Mr. LABOUCHERE, will declare themselves in favour of a single responsible representative Chamber. The majority of the party, on the other hand, at least in the House of Commons, will follow Lord ROSEBERY, and declare themselves in favour of mending, and not of ending, the Upper House. But, if we are correctly informed, the constituent elements of the Liberal party in the House of Commons are not representative of the same elements in the country—that is, the Radical policy of ending the House of Lords is backed by the vast majority of Liberals in the constituencies, while the official Liberal policy of mending the House of Lords finds little favour with the mass of voters.

This statement seems to us reasonable, and to explain the HOME SECRETARY's declaration. It is not necessary

to assert that by this speech Mr. ASQUITH offers himself as a possible candidate for the Premiership; it is sufficient that he sees that Lord ROSEBERY's desire to strengthen the House of Lords finds but a small following in the constituencies, and with his usual astuteness he puts the powers of a large and well-equipped intellect at the disposal of the Radical masses. He may find his reward. With Mr. ASQUITH to lead them, and a cry which unites the party to go to the country with, the situation seems to us to be growing serious. If the Conservatives win the next General Election, as we thought probable, they stand in danger now of winning by only a narrow majority; for enthusiasm excites enthusiasm, and the Radical who wishes to end an institution is always a more formidable antagonist than the Moderate who is willing to mend it.

## OUR EXPANSION IN CENTRAL AFRICA.

THE history of England in the last five years must be looked for not in England but in Africa, where there has been built up, and is still building, an extension of our world-empire, the importance of which will be estimated more adequately a quarter of a century hence than it is to-day. This work of expansion has gone on chiefly south of the Zambesi. Towns have sprung up and newspapers are published, and most of the conditions of a highly organized civilization are to be found where a year ago armed *impis* surrounded the kraal of the monarch of the most formidable fighting people in the Dark Continent.

The same work of expansion has been going on in Nyasaland and the neighbouring districts, though, owing to the absence of that swiftest developer of colonization, the discovery of paying gold reefs, the work has been more gradual, and has also attracted much less attention. Those who some days ago, at a meeting of the Royal Geographical Society, heard Mr. H. H. JOHNSTON, our Commissioner and Consul-General, read a paper on the British Central Africa Protectorate must have been agreeably surprised at the magnitude of the results obtained in a brief three years' administration. For three years Mr. JOHNSTON has been administering the Protectorate for the Imperial Government, and supervising for the British South Africa Company the Sphere of influence beyond, and this briefly is his record.

He found parts of the regions he was sent to govern almost denuded of inhabitants, and parts in a condition of chaos and civil war. The cause of all this confusion and anarchy was the slave-trade, with its continual raids and the petty wars those raids gave rise to. Even in the districts of Blantyre and West Nyasa, where European influence was strongest, the slave-trade was openly carried on, and security of life and property—for natives, at all events—there was none.

A few missionaries and coffee-planters and the natives the former had educated and influenced—with what great success Mr. JOHNSTON admiringly acknowledges—were the one firm spot, in the midst of the quagmire of disorder, on which safe footing might be found to begin the work. Mr. JOHNSTON recognized at once that nothing short of the suppression of the slave-trade would open the road to successful administration. The means and men at his command for this purpose were not excessive. A force of seventy Sikhs and one hundred Zanzibaris, led by a brilliant and accomplished English officer lent by the Indian Government, was his army; and the authority to levy taxes was the somewhat scanty financial support accorded by the Home Government, though of course the sinews of war were amply supplied from time to time by the grants made by Mr. RHODES.

Like the *pax Romana* our British peace generally

begins with war. The destruction of anarchy and the conditions which cause it must be carried out before constructive work can begin. The slave-trade had to be killed, not scotched; and in Central Africa the slave-trade had grown to giant dimensions, and, as might have been foreseen, died hard. At first, indeed, the skill and daring of Captain CECIL MAGUIRE and his Sikhs carried all before them; but the loss of that fine soldier, who sacrificed his life in endeavouring to bring off his men from a desperate situation in the course of a campaign against MAKANJIRA, the most formidable of the slave-trading chiefs, was the first of a series of reverses and misfortunes which finally left Mr. JOHNSTON with but forty Sikhs, and forced him temporarily to abandon the offensive. From this miserable condition of impotence Mr. JOHNSTON and the crusade against slavery were rescued by a special grant from Mr. RHODES; the war-chest thus replenished, the force of Sikhs was increased and the work again begun. MAKANJIRA was attacked and subdued, and the campaign brought to a successful termination in the suppression of the slave-trade throughout the Protectorate.

Law and order are now firmly established. Excellent roads have been made. A telegraph line has been constructed by the African Trans-continental Company, and already employs trained native operators. The Government printing, including the *Gazette*, is done by natives taught in the schools of the Universities Mission and the Church of Scotland Mission, whose work in industrial education cannot be too highly spoken of; the suppression of the slave-trade has made native labour abundant and cheap, the trade of the country has increased fivefold, and the value of land twentyfold.

Among other indications of Mr. JOHNSTON's success, we note that not only is the white population five times greater than it was, but the native population has multiplied with extraordinary rapidity—the Census, for instance, in the Shiré district showing an increase from 1,000 natives in 1891 to 10,000 in 1894 who pay hut taxes to the amount of above 400*l.*, and are peaceful, prosperous, and contented; and even the warlike Yaos, sometime Mr. JOHNSTON's fiercest opponents, are converted into excellent police; in short, the foundation of a stable administration has been triumphantly completed.

Furthermore, Mr. JOHNSTON has initiated a new movement of colonization, beginning in the employment of Indian troops and the encouragement of Indian traders, from which far-reaching political and social advantages may be expected, if, as he predicts, Central Africa becomes the centre of emigration for the more enterprising section of our fellow-subjects in India.

The benefit to the natives of Central Africa of the establishment of law and order under our flag ought to be obvious to the most carping Little Englander. It is, no doubt, true that the suppression of slavery will open up new fields for our commerce, which will prove immediately and increasingly profitable; but that need not make us doubt the reality of the benefits conferred. It is Mr. JOHNSTON's merit to have shown that the ending of the slave-trade is not only a work of genuine philanthropy, but also that it is good business. And always it must be remembered that in this region we have to count with no national feeling, no spirit of antagonism between the black and white races. Our Administrator has been cordially supported by four-fifths of the native population in his crusade against the slave-trade, and probably no one in the whole country in question, except some disconsolate slave-trader, would deny that the establishment of the *pax Britannica*, while admittedly necessary to our own expansion and our own commerce, has been altogether a welcome boon to the inhabitants of our Protectorate in Central Africa.

And here it is bare justice to remember that the credit of Mr. JOHNSTON's work, when his own individual share has been acknowledged, belongs, not to the Imperial Government, but to Mr. RHODES and his Company, whose rare public spirit supplied the funds for practically the whole work of administration, together with special grants which alone made possible that work of humanity and true civilization—the suppression of the slave-trade. Nor is this all that England owes to Mr. RHODES. The African Trans-continental Telegraph Company, which will shortly be open for messages from Blantyre, in Central Africa, to Salisbury, in Mashonaland (a telegraph-line being admittedly a necessary instrument for the development of our Empire, though not likely for a long time to prove remunerative), owes its existence to the enlightened patriotism of the same public-spirited millionaire, who has himself found the bulk of the capital.

Briefly, Mr. RHODES has for years thrown his great abilities, his long purse, his immense influence at the Cape into the work of England's expansion in Africa. While excellently seconded by his subordinates, and supported by all men of light and leading in South Africa, and by not a few here, he may, in a very real sense, be said alone to have conceived and carried out this astonishing work, whereby an empire in which the area of France or Germany would be merely a province has been in five years added to our dominions.

Mr. RHODES is now in London. His conduct during the past year or two has been subjected to the criticism of all men, and has been minutely canvassed in the Press. But, whatever faults of word or deed may have been committed by him, he may not unreasonably expect it to be said of him, as it was said of ROBERT CLIVE, that he has rendered "great and distinguished services to his country."

#### THE WAR IN THE EAST.

THE detailed accounts which are now beginning to reach us from the seat of war show that the Japanese advance has not been quite the walk-over which telegrams had led us to infer. The battle of Pingyang, for instance, turns out to have involved hard fighting. General YEH held the southern attack fairly in check to the end, causing severe loss to the assailants; General Tso was killed on the parapet of a battery while personally directing its fire; and the issue seems to have been decided, at last, mainly by the well-conceived attack upon the Chinese rear. That is a menace to which the Chinese are peculiarly sensitive, and to which the wooden nature of their tactics renders them specially liable. They construct works on their front, to oppose an enemy advancing from a known quarter. GORDON's unreasonable propensity for circumventing these arrangements was a matter of serious discomposure to the Taepings, and history is evidently repeating itself in the present campaign. Still, though these limitations have placed the Chinese at an unquestionable disadvantage, there has, as we said before, been severe fighting, and fighting that has involved considerable loss to the attacking force. We hear of sick and wounded arriving in numbers at Chemulpo and Seoul, besides numbers more shipped back to Japan; and this may, perhaps, explain the constant reinforcements, which would appear unnecessary if the Japanese successes had been so cheaply purchased as we were at first led to infer. For not only have all the reserves been called up, but this year's conscripts have now been summoned to the colours.

These considerations may tend to justify our previous suggestion that the Chinese case was not so hopeless

but that the Imperial Government might have been wise to show a bolder front, instead of begging for mediation with a view to peace. If its troops are uniformly beaten, they clearly, when they have respectable arms, make the victors pay a price; and the cumulative effect of such Pyrrhic victories might be serious for the Japanese. For the strain must tell with disproportionate effect upon the smaller Power; nor must it be forgotten that winter is advancing to the aid of the Chinese with rapid strides. It may be within a fortnight; it may not be for three weeks; but certainly within a month the head waters of the Bay of Corea and of the Gulf of Pecheli will be closed by ice; and then will begin that bitter Manchurian winter which many anticipate will prove more fatal than Chinese bullets to a race unaccustomed to exposure and prone to chest disease. Can it be some apprehension of this kind that is slackening the energy of the Japanese? or was the Manchurian collapse overrated, and are there still sufficient Chinese between Moukden and the Corean frontier to delay Count YAMAGATA's advance? Moukden was to have been taken by the 3rd of November, as a fitting present for the MIKADO's birthday; but it has not yet fallen, and the invaders do not seem to have made much progress along the road. We hear reports of an engagement at Suiyen (in the south-west), in which the Chinese were, as usual, defeated; but an attempt to force the Motien Pass, through the hills which cross the Moukden road some distance in front of Feng-wang-cheng, is said to have been repulsed by General NIEH, who has command of that post.

The negotiations for peace, in the meantime, do not seem to be advancing with undiplomatic haste. England is unquestionably anxious to terminate the war, and is declared to be in accord with Russia in this and other respects. But Germany and Italy seem indisposed to meddle; and France is understood to conceive that her interests are confined to the frontiers of Tongking, where the constant brigandage which is charged against the Chinese may lead to complications, and might possibly entail rectifications, in certain eventualities. Japan is unquestionably anxious to humiliate China by forcing her to sue directly for peace. Her response to the overtures of the United States appears to amount to an intimation to that effect. Her successes have been such, she considers, as to entitle her to expect that gratification. Besides, the Government has, admittedly, to reckon with the excited feeling of the nation, and is probably not unwilling to go on fighting in the hope of achieving some signal success. The opposition in the Diet is only suspended, and might break out with greater energy if peace were made on terms incommensurate with the expectations that have been raised. Russia is said, rightly or wrongly, to have given Japan fair warning that she will not be allowed to occupy Corea; so that, if accounts were closed just at present, the Government might fail to exhibit a sufficient balance. For every reason, therefore, attention is becoming concentrated upon Port Arthur. The fighting promises to be heavier there than any that has occurred yet during the campaign, and complete victory on either side would probably exercise a decisive influence on events. The Japanese would score its capture as a political as well as military triumph, and the depressing effect at Peking would be correspondingly great; while, if the Chinese can succeed in repelling the attack, it might prove a turning point in the war. Not that there is any indication of a Chinese general arising who shall prove able to win a pitched battle in the open field; but that successful resistance would give Chinese statesmen time to recover their nerve, allow time for the manufacture and purchase of weapons and the general improvement of organization,

and, above all, provide time for that gradual process of attrition by which, more than by any single telling blow, the Chinese might possibly hope to wear down the Japanese attack.

#### ENGLISH LITERATURE AT OXFORD.

SOME remarks of ours on the new School at Oxford have brought us, among other interesting comments, a postcard from the Rev. A. L. MAYHEW. Mr. MAYHEW is apparently annoyed because we directed our criticism of the Board of Studies to the qualifications for their work of the newly-elected members. We should have thought the reason for so doing was tolerably clear; but we are willing enough to say a word or two on the official membership of the Board, if Mr. MAYHEW likes. The statute confers that status upon nine professors, of whom, with a single exception, none owes his post or reputation to any acquaintance he may happen to have with English literature. The exception is the Professor of Poetry, and we are obliged to Mr. MAYHEW for troubling to correct a rather obvious error of ours in this connexion. The addition of Professor PALGRAVE to the Board strengthens it; but our argument stands almost unaffected. Professor PALGRAVE cannot be expected to fight single-handed against a crowd of pedants determined to degrade the study of English literature into a branch of philology. This becomes manifest when we pass the other names in review; Professor EARLE did some good work in Anglo-Saxon a large number of years ago; Professor NAPIER was given a Chair, apparently in the hope that he might complete his studies in the same dialect; Professors BYWATER, ELLIS, RHYS, and MAX MÜLLER represent classics, philology, and things in general; and Professor MONTAGU BURROWS is possibly as much to be respected for his intimacy with English literature as he is to be admired for his very curious knowledge of history.

The scheme provided for a certain number of professors of various branches of philology on the Board, and left it open to the University to make the balance even, if it chose, by selecting representative students of literature. But Oxford has deliberately chosen not merely to allow the philological element to be amply represented, as the statute provides, but actually to exclude literature entirely from that elected section of the Board which will, no doubt, have nearly the whole management of the business in its hands. Two more members will have been elected before these words are in print, and their presence on the Board will remove it still further from any claim to superintend studies in English literature: we are grateful to Mr. ARTHUR SIDGWICK for giving our boys an agreeable and humorous introduction to Greek prose composition, and we have no doubt some credit is due to Dr. JOSEPH WRIGHT for turning his knowledge of German to account, in adapting certain Gothic, Old High-German, and Middle High-German grammars for English use; but we confess we fail to see how the addition of these men to the Board does anything but make matters worse from the point of view of those who want a School of Literature. The fact is, Oxford is behaving in a way altogether beneath its dignity in this matter. It might have established a School of English Language, or a School of English Literature, or both. It might conceivably have rolled the two ill-yoked subjects into one working curriculum, though the awful example of the Mediæval and Modern Languages Tripos at Cambridge ought to have deterred it. But it has done none of these things; instead, it has set up the machinery for examining in philology, and is now going to grant honours which will purport to have been obtained for knowledge of literature. Surely this is dishonest.

Dishonesty, indeed, is the marked characteristic of each University's dealings with English literature. The cause is not far to seek. The number of men at Oxford or Cambridge who are really entitled by their knowledge and critical faculties to speak with authority on the masterpieces and history of our literature is very small; and they are outnumbered, out-shouted, and out-voiced by pretentious dilettanti, pushing quacks, and dryasdust philologists. The average Don knows his classics or mathematics or history or natural science well enough, and is content to occupy himself with his special study. If he is bothered much about a new school for anything, he gives a languid consent, and leaves the practical working of the thing to those who pose as "specialists." What sort of men Oxford and Cambridge regard as "specialists" in the matter of English literature we have recently seen. Any one who cares to take the trouble of going a little more fully into the matter would do well to glance at the way in which the University procures and sanctions the editing of the English classics. We have been at the pains of pointing out in another column a few of the most glaring errors of omission and commission, a few of the examples of astonishing negligence and painful incompetence, which disfigure an Oxford edition of DRYDEN recently prepared for the use of young students. The book is no worse than most of the kind which the Universities force upon the children, young men, and women whose education they control, directly and indirectly. It is possibly considered (at Oxford) a trifle better, as we vaguely remember a boastful little advertisement that called attention to some peculiar merit which it was supposed to possess. It will do well enough to exemplify the attitude of Oxford towards the study of English literature.

#### OUR NEXT WAR.

**I**N a remarkable book on the relation of the British Navy to British Commerce that has just appeared, the subject of naval efficiency is considered from a novel point of view, and the lessons of the past are applied to the needs of the present with singular clearness and force. Though its title may hint of theory, there is nothing of airy speculation, of the nature of a *Kriegspiel*, about *Our Next War; in its Commercial Aspect* (BLADES, EAST, & BLADES). It differs entirely from the various examples of expert or amateur literature on the navy that has poured from the press of late. Of merely technical points of controversy in naval matters it takes no note whatever. Questions of arms, or armament, or equipment generally, it leaves untouched. The author, Mr. J. T. DAWSON, writes as a man of business, employing the facts and figures of business men in the past. By what we must call a happy inspiration, since the results are so instructive, he has been led to study the books of certain representative underwriters of Lloyd's of the period of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars. As historical material these documents, it must be admitted, are not a little curious. They are, also, fruitful in suggestion and warning, as is convincingly shown by the conclusions drawn from them by Mr. DAWSON. If our very existence as a nation depends upon our supremacy on the seas, as all are now agreed, the protection of our commerce in time of war is a question that ranks first in national importance. The strength of our navy should accord with the magnitude of our commerce. At the opening of our last great naval war in 1793 we were what we still are, a maritime Power, though we did not then depend for bread upon foreign wheat. For twenty-two years, with brief and unimportant intervals, we were engaged

in a tremendous struggle with the most powerful enemy we had yet encountered. We emerged successful, after prolonged efforts such as we had never made before and have had no occasion for since. The comparative tables of marine-insurance rates printed in Mr. DAWSON's book show what share in the strain on the national resources was borne by those directly concerned in commerce. If we fought hard, we spent freely. We were taxed as we had never been taxed, and incurred a National Debt, in proportion to our means and population, greater than any other nation has known. Even in the last years of the period, as Mr. DAWSON's figures show, the "war risk" with respect to the insurance rates on the Atlantic trade continued to rise. Despite the crushing of the combined fleets of the enemy at Trafalgar, and despite NAPOLEON's dream of blockade against British ports proving a vain thing for want of a navy to enforce it, our commerce suffered terribly. Mr. DAWSON is hardly correct in stating "that after 1805 we had scarcely left an "enemy's ship afloat, and at sea, excepting privateers, "the skulking débris of defeated navies," since there was the Danish fleet, for example, which NAPOLEON might have employed against us, if we had not promptly destroyed it two years later, at Copenhagen. Still the significant fact remains that, in spite of our great naval successes, our commerce was being "plundered at sea" to an extent estimated by Mr. DAWSON at "not much short of 10 per cent. upon everything "we put afloat." Altogether, during this long period of incessant warfare, in spite of all we achieved, "the "enemy levied," as Mr. DAWSON puts it, "a marine- "insurance toll of some 5 per cent. upon everything "we put afloat."

With these facts before us, it is natural to ask what should be our state of preparation, and what the preconceived arrangement between "Lloyd's," as representing the commerce of the country, and the Admiralty in the event of war. If such sacrifices were inevitable when dealing with a crippled enemy, what may ours not be in these times? Mr. DAWSON does not, of course, undertake to forecast the "war risk" rate on any given line of trade. But in our next great naval war, as in our last, the enemy's aim will be the destruction of our commerce. The precise degree of efficiency or non-efficiency of our navy as protection to our commerce will, says Mr. DAWSON, be ascertained and posted at "Lloyd's," and made known from day to day in all the commercial centres of the world as surely as the price of Consols. Such a toll on our commerce as was levied of old would have an immediate effect, the writer observes, "and one greater than it had in "the past." He urges that it would be more than any freight obtainable in these days could sustain; for the freight is now reduced to the lowest possible point, owing to the keenness of the competition. At the same time, the enormous increase of our trade has converted the seas into what Mr. DAWSON calls "well-stocked preserves," containing countless wealth, mostly British property. How vast has been the increase of our trade since the period of the wars with France is well shown by comparing the years 1785 and 1892, cited by Mr. DAWSON to give full effect to the contrast presented by his comparative table of marine insurance in 1812 and in 1892. In 1785, eight years before war was declared, our exports and imports amounted to thirty-two millions. In 1892 the total exports and imports were seven hundred and fifteen millions. "Five per cent. war premium on these "values would have been," Mr. DAWSON remarks, "on "the scale of 1785—1,561,000!, and on the scale "of 1892—35,771,000!," or nearly four millions more than the total value of exports and imports in 1785. This comparison is an effective illustration of the prodigious increase in the requirements of these

times. At the outbreak of war the great trade routes or ocean highways would be crowded with vessels bearing rich cargoes open at all points to the attack of the enemy. Regarding the navy, in relation to the "war danger of our commerce," as something like what the Fire Brigade is to the incendiary danger of London, he observes that "we must steadily back it " by insurance."

English politicians to-day have been compelled by the steady pressure of competent naval criticism to accept as a fundamental fact that our navy ought to be superior to the navies of any two European Powers combined against us, even to the united navies of France and Russia. If our navy is in this condition—that is, if we are more than a match for France and Russia together—it is assumed that our commerce is safe.

This the author of *Our Next War* shows to be an assumption that will not bear examination. For, by adducing the evidence of our experience in the past, he is able to prove that, even after our navy had wiped out of existence the hostile fleets of Europe, we lost so much by privateers that the same proportion of loss to-day would drive our whole carrying-trade, conducted on a narrower margin of profit, into neutral bottoms.

The gist of the matter is, that it is not enough to sweep the seas; it is not enough to have no two fleets in existence which would dare, combined, to meet our battle-ships. In order to preserve our commerce and our carrying-trade we must be able to mask the whole fleets of France and Russia—that is, we must be able to blockade them effectively; and, to maintain an effective blockade, our warships must be to the combined warships of France and Russia in the proportion of five to three. This is the deliberate view of our first authority on naval questions, Admiral Sir G. HORNBY. It must be remembered that a blockade was far more easy to maintain effectively in the old days of sailing-ships than it is now in the days of steam, when the blockaded squadron can come out at any time, and has always plenty of coal, while the blockading squadron must be continually supplied, if it is to keep the sea and be ready for action.

The argument of the author of *Our Next War* bears out the contention of Admiral HORNBY and the best opinion in our navy. We must be strong enough, not only to overwhelm any hostile fleet on the seas; we must be strong enough to blockade them in port. For, were but half a dozen of our grain-ships taken by the enemy, immediately the insurance-rates at Lloyd's would go up to a prohibitive point. It is, indeed, a doubtful question whether any obtainable increase of our navy would really safeguard our merchantmen; for we are apt to forget that we are now enormously the richest power on the seas, and the inducement to hostile privateers, where most of the ships they will meet will be certainly British, is greatly increased. In order to deal with foreign privateers and to protect our commerce, Admiral HORNBY has stated that we need some 300 cruisers in addition to those we already possess. There can be no doubt, we think, that our navy should be largely increased.

It is true, of course, that our superior facilities for coaling, as well as the greater regularity of steamships, makes it easier for us than it was to protect our merchantmen; but, when all is said, it is doubtful whether the best course would not be for our Government to arrange for the State to insure all our mercantile navy, and employ our whole strength of warships and cruisers in offensive operations; while the cost of paying the insurance upon the merchantmen we had lost might be defrayed out of a war indemnity specially calculated for that purpose.

#### THACKERAY'S PLACE IN LITERATURE.

**I**N the November number of the *Forum* Mr. Frederic Harrison has written an article upon "Thackeray's Place in Literature." Mr. Harrison is a man of letters whose opinions generally deserve respectful consideration; his judgments on matters of literature in especial are always sober and thoughtful, and betray an extreme desire to be open-minded and impartial. Besides these high critical qualifications, he himself, as every one knows, is an excellent writer; and yet we opened his essay upon Thackeray with a certain nervous shrinking. He was undertaking, we felt, one of the most difficult tasks that could be set a critic, and the easy flow of his introductory sentences convinced us that he was not sufficiently conscious of the almost impossible nature of his enterprise. Yet the sad experience of his forerunners might have warned him. It took the world over two hundred years to find Shakespeare's place in literature, and, had it not been for Lessing and Goethe, Englishmen might even now be indulging in the snug contempt that Pepys showed for the author of *The Midsummer Night's Dream*, or be playing the self-complacent superior to the playwright who was "much more careful to please than to instruct," as Dr. Johnson once phrased it. And this is not a singular or an exceptional instance of the incompetence of criticism. On the contrary, it is a commonplace in the history of art that the greatest men pass through life unappreciated by their contemporaries. Carlyle was the first, we think, to try to give this truth artistic form. He tells us how in a small town one may seek in vain for a great cathedral—the ordinary houses conceal it from the view; but when one goes thirty or forty miles away the dwelling-houses all disappear, leaving the huge building alone upon the horizon. As the transitory vanishes, he remarks finely, the Eternal becomes ever the more clearly visible. The simile is a memorable one, but conveys something more than the simple truth. It is enough to say that the greater a man is the fewer there will be in any generation capable of appreciating him. A man can only be judged by his peers; a Shakespeare, therefore, has to await the final award for long centuries. It will be interesting, then, to see how Mr. Frederic Harrison judges Thackeray and what place in the literary Pantheon he assigns to the author of *Vanity Fair*.

And because of Mr. Harrison's largeness of view and wealth of sympathy, his *dicta* on many points are of high value. At the very outset he tells us that Thackeray's mastery over style places him "amongst the very greatest masters of English prose, and undoubtedly as the most certain and faultless of all the prose writers of the Victorian age." Again and again he recurs to this theme. Noting that Thackeray's style was as good in his first book as in his *Vanity Fair*, he talks of his "prodigious precocity in style," and draws upon his stock of laudatory epithets—"his exquisite style," "faultless and beautiful style," "a style which, for purity and polish, was beyond the reach of Fielding, Richardson, or Scott"—until at length he loses all measure: "Of Thackeray's style—a style that has every quality in perfection: simplicity, clearness, ease, force, elasticity, and grace—it is difficult to speak but in terms of unstinted admiration." Now Mr. Frederic Harrison knows well that neither Thackeray's style nor anybody else's style "has every quality in perfection"; he knows better than most that Thackeray's style has not the trenchant power and pungency of Swift's, nor the weight and dignity of Bacon's, nor the carven solidity of Landor's. Why, then, does he overpraise it? The doubt comes to us—it is only a doubt as yet—that Mr. Frederic Harrison, dimly conscious of having done Thackeray less than justice in other respects, is seeking to make up for his stinginess in essentials by a heedless generosity in a matter of less moment.

This apprehension is strengthened in us as we see how Mr. Harrison exalts all the novelist's minor achievements. He will have it that Thackeray's illustrations of his own books are "a very important portion of the writer's method." Damning with exaggerated praise, he asserts that "they assist us to understand the characters." "It is true," he admits, "they are ill drawn, often impossible, crude and almost childish in their incorrectness and artlessness; but they have in them the soul of a great caricaturist, they have the Hogarthian touch of a great comic artist." As we read, the conviction grows upon us that it is Mr. Harrison's method to overpraise the unimportant, in order that he may do less than justice to Thackeray's real claims. For

he proceeds, "In parody of every kind, from the most admired imitation down to the most boisterous burlesque, Thackeray stands at the head of all other imitators." "The 'Novels by Eminent Hands,'" he tells us, "are much more than parodies, they are real criticism—sound, wise, genial, and instructive." Even Thackeray's verses are commended, and then we reach the climax:—"It is hardly extravagant to say of Thackeray that, of all the Englishmen of this century, he has written the best comedy of manners, the best extravaganza, the best burlesque, the best parody, and the best comic song." It seems almost a pity that Thackeray cannot be praised for dancing a jig. But Mr. Harrison can go to an anticlimax. "One of his (Thackeray's) strongest claims is the vast quantity and variety of his best work, and the singularly small proportion of inferior work." . . . "Of his twenty-six volumes not one is irksome to read—to re-read, and to linger over in the reading." This is pitiful, we exclaim, and make a note of indignant protest, when, to our surprise, we find that Mr. Harrison has forestalled us. "Pendennis is certainly much inferior to *Vanity Fair*, and *Philip* is much inferior to *Pendennis*," and so forth down to *Lovel the Widower*. Some one more ingenious than we are must explain this apparent contradiction.

Let us get to the heart of the matter: "Thackeray's masterpiece beyond question is *Vanity Fair*, which as a comedy of the manners of contemporary life is quite the greatest achievement in English literature since *Tom Jones*. It has not the consummate plot of *Tom Jones*; it has not the breadth, the Shakspearian jollity, the genial humanity of the great "prose Homer"; it has not such a beautiful character as Sophia Western. But *Vanity Fair* may be put beside *Tom Jones* for variety of character, intense reality, ingenuity of incident, and profusion of wit, humour, and invention. It is even better written than *Tom Jones*, has more pathos and more tragedy, and is happily free from the nauseous blots into which Harry Fielding was betrayed by the taste of his age."

Here we have Mr. Harrison at his best, and before going further we must note some of our differences with him. Amelia we consider quite as beautiful a character as Sophia Western, and considerably better drawn. There is nothing so difficult as to make an ordinary good character lifelike and interesting. By subtly dwelling on her inconsistencies and foolishness, her little outbursts of anger, and her more pitiful weakness in sorrow, Thackeray has made Amelia real to us. Sophia Western remains in that vague region of the ideal where men and women are seen as trees walking. She is impossibly perfect, and Lady Bellaston as a piece of painting is far preferable to her. It is a monstrous thing to say that "*Vanity Fair* may be put beside *Tom Jones* for variety of character." There are only four or five characters in *Tom Jones* and thirty or forty in *Vanity Fair*, and there are a dozen characters in *Vanity Fair* better drawn, more subtly, more incisively realized, than any in *Tom Jones*. You might as well compare the "St. George and the Dragon" of Rubens with *Las Lanzas* of Velasquez.

But let us hear Mr. Harrison further:—

"The great triumph of *Vanity Fair*—the great triumph of modern fiction—is Becky Sharp: a character which will ever stand in the very foremost rank of English literature, if not with Falstaff and Shylock, then with Squire Western, Uncle Toby, Mr. Primrose, Jonathan Oldbuck, and Sam Weller. There is no character in the whole range of literature which has been worked out with more elaborate completeness. She is drawn from girlhood to old age, under every conceivable condition, and is brought face to face with all kinds of persons and trials. In all circumstances Becky is true to herself; her ingenuity, her wit, her selfishness, her audacity, her cunning, her clear, cool, alert brain, even her common sense, her spirit of justice, when she herself is not concerned, and her good-nature, when it could cost her nothing—all this is unfailing, inimitable, never to be forgotten. Some good people cry out that she is so wicked. Of course she is wicked: so were Iago and Blifil. The only question is, if she be real? Most certainly she is, as real as anything in the whole range of fiction, as real as Tartuffe or Gil Blas, Wilhelm Meister or Rob Roy. No one doubts that Becky Sharps exist—unhappily they are not even very uncommon. And Thackeray has drawn one typical example of such bad women with an anatomical precision that makes us shudder."

This, no doubt, will seem to most people high praise, and

praise reasonably adjusted too; and yet we are not satisfied. Becky Sharp cannot be put with Squire Western or Sam Weller without offending our sense of justice. She stands with Falstaff and Hamlet and Richard III., if not even above these consummate pictures. To say that she is the greatest portrait of a woman in English literature is to say but little, for neither the dark woman of Shakespeare's Sonnets nor his Cleopatra can be placed beside her. To find some one to compare with her we must go outside the realm of English work; she is more real than *Manon Lescaut* and more human than *la Cousine Bette*; she is, we believe, the most splendid and appalling and real woman's character in the world's literature. The creator of such a character can do without the excuses and extenuations put forward for him by Mr. Frederic Harrison; for Mr. Harrison, if a moralist, and an English moralist, and an honest moralist, can also turn special pleader where all special pleading is out of place. Rejecting the charge of cynic and misanthrope that has been brought against Thackeray, he says:—"It is too often forgotten that *Vanity Fair* is not intended to be simply the world; it is society, it is fashion; the market where mammon-worship, folly, and dissipation display their wares. Thackeray wrote many other books, and has given us many worthy characters." We cannot understand how Mr. Harrison came to write the above sentences; the one we have put in italics might have been written by Mrs. Grundy herself. And worse remains behind, for the man who contests such a charge admits its relevancy, and lays himself open to be treated as if he were the first promulgator of it. And this is Mr. Harrison's position:—

"There is something ungenial, there is a bitter taste left when we have enjoyed these books—especially as we lay down *Vanity Fair*. It is a long comedy of roguery, meanness, selfishness, intrigue, and affection. Rakes, ruffians, bullies, parasites, fortune-hunters, adventurers, women who sell themselves, and men who cheat and cringe, pass before us in one incessant procession, crushing the weak and making fools of the good."

Here we have the real charge brought by the British public against Thackeray clearly put by Mr. Frederic Harrison. Mrs. Grundy, old as she is and decrepit, can never hope to find a better advocate. Let us take him at his very best, and consider his final pronouncement:—

"But to say this is not to condemn Thackeray as a cynic. With these many scenes of exquisite tenderness and pathos, with men and women of such loving hearts and devoted spirits, with the profusion of gay, kindly, childlike love of innocent fun, that we find all through Thackeray's work, he does not belong to the order of the Jonathan Swifts, the Balzacs, the Zolas, the gruesome anatomists of human vice and meanness. On the other hand, he does not belong to the order of the Shakespeares, Goethes, and Scotts, to whom human virtue and dignity always remain in the end the supreme forces of human life. Thackeray, with a fine and sympathetic soul, had a creative imagination that was far stronger on the darker and fouler sides of life than it was on the brighter and purer side of life. He saw the bright and pure side: he loved it, he felt with it, he made us love it. But his artistic genius worked with more free and consummate zest when he painted the dark and the foul. His creative imagination fell short of the true equipoise, of that just vision of chiaroscuro, which we find in the greatest masters of the human heart. This limitation of his genius has been visited upon Thackeray with a heavy hand. And, such as it is, he must bear it."

Surely this is Mrs. Grundy's case put with a fineness and moderation and a deft appeal to reason such as she could never have hoped for in this last decade of the century. And yet how weak the argument is, how irrelevant to the real issue. Judged in this way a Rembrandt would be placed below a Bellini or a Raphael. Surely the artist must be judged as an artist. Dr. Johnson blames Shakespeare, as we have seen, because he was more careful "to please than to instruct"; but we have long ago recognized that Johnson here discovers his own limitation—

And they who level  
At my abuses reckon up their own.

The moralist must not judge the artist, but if he is to be heard against him let us see to it that his witness is true. The gradual degradation of Becky Sharp seems to us as awful a punishment, and certainly conveys as direct a moral, as the punishment of David.

We do not need to argue the matter; we refuse to

compare Thackeray with Scott; but before Mr. Harrison condemns Thackeray, because of the darkness of his great picture, we would ask him to read the *Lear* and the *Timon of Athens*—which Shakespeare must have written when about the same age as Thackeray was when he wrote his *Vanity Fair*—and tell us whether Shakespeare's view of life was not more bitter and more cynical and more desolating than that of the later master. Nay, we might urge that, with the almost universal decay of belief, life has grown greyer and harder and more bitter, and that Thackeray was within his rights in so depicting it. But we shall have reason, doubtless, soon to return to these points; and so for the present we will content ourselves with giving Mr. Harrison's final statement:—"The place of Thackeray in English literature will always be determined by his *Vanity Fair*, which will be read, we may confidently predict, as long as *Tom Jones*, *Clarissa*, *Tristram Shandy*, *The Antiquary*, and *Pickwick*." From the latter part of this judgment we must dissent; for we believe, and we are glad of the opportunity of saying it, that Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* is far and away the greatest prose work in English literature, a work that stands with the *Othello* and the *Macbeth* among the greatest productions of the human intellect; a work that has only one superior in all literature, and that is the greatest book ever written, the *Don Quixote*.

#### THE TRANSIT OF MERCURY.

ON the afternoon of the 10th inst. the planet Mercury performed a transit across the sun's disc. This feat was last accomplished on May 9, 1891. The average interval between two successive recurrences of the phenomenon is between seven and eight years. Even when a transit of Mercury does occur, it is only on comparatively few occasions that it can be witnessed from Great Britain. It did so happen that the recent event, or rather a small portion of it, would have been visible from these islands last Saturday if the weather had allowed the sun to be seen. Unfortunately at the great majority of places where a watch was kept, and it was kept at very many, the clouds so prevalent this winter obscured the sun completely, and no trace of the phenomenon was observed. Professor Turner at Sidmouth has, we learn, met with some success, but at Greenwich, as well as at the other observatories, the ample preparations which were made led to no useful results. Even had the weather been the clearest, the circumstances were very unfavourable so far as observers in these countries were concerned. It was only about a quarter of an hour before sunset that the planet was timed to enter on the solar disc, and even had the sun been visible down to the horizon, the planet would by that time have only performed a small part of its journey across the brilliant surface.

We may, however, say at once that astronomers attached no great importance to any observations which could have been made, even had the circumstances been as favourable as they were distinctly the reverse. There is no fundamental question to be settled by the transit of Mercury comparable with that which it has been sought to settle by observations of the transit of Venus. We look to the transit of the latter planet as affording one of the best known, if not the most accurate, methods of finding the distance of the sun, or, in fact, the scale of the solar system. But the transit of Mercury offers no aid in the determination of this great problem of celestial surveying. The planet is too far from the earth to be useful for such a purpose. There has been accordingly, on this occasion, no inducement to astronomers to despatch expeditions to remote regions of the globe in order to make observations from different points.

But it must not therefore be supposed that there is no value whatever to be obtained from a successful observation of the transit of Mercury. No doubt the phenomenon is not at all a striking one. A telescope is required to render the planet visible, both because it is intrinsically so small, and because of its great distance from the earth. Then, when the right moment arrives, the little black spot is seen creeping on to the sun. It slowly moves across the great luminary, to pass from the disc in about five hours, and thus to retreat again to the invisibility from which it had emerged at the commencement of the phenomenon. One value which the astronomer would attach to a careful observation of the transit would be an improvement in our

knowledge of the exact track in which Mercury moves. We can calculate with considerable accuracy the moment at which the entry on the sun's disc will commence, and we can also foresee the point on the sun's limb at which the black spot is to be first looked for. But if the circumstances were favourable, the observer would be able to determine by what he actually sees the corrections that should be applied to our calculated results. These corrections would be available to improve our knowledge of the movement of the planet. This is specially requisite in the case of this particular object, for Mercury exhibits irregularities not yet fully accounted for. It is also to be remembered that the occurrence of a transit enables the place of the planet to be determined at that particular point of its orbit where the customary methods of the astronomer fail. We cannot measure with our ordinary instruments the place of Mercury when in the immediate vicinity of the sun; the glare of the sun renders that planet invisible. All the more acceptable, therefore, would be an opportunity for an accurate determination of the place in which the planet is situated during a transit.

There is also information on a circumstance connected with the physical character of the planet to be looked for. It is a question of great interest to determine how far such a planet as Mercury resembles our globe in the possession of an atmosphere. It is quite plain that observations of the planet under ordinary conditions are unable to throw any light on the matter. If Mercury has an atmosphere, no observations of the planet either as an evening star or a morning star can make that atmosphere visible. The case, however, is distinctly different when the planet is viewed in front of the sun. The refraction of the sun's light through the ring of air surrounding the planet would probably be visible. On previous occasions something of this kind has been seen, and it had been hoped that, with the superior telescopes now available, some satisfactory information on this subject might have been gained on Saturday last. Up to the present no tidings have reached us of any conspicuous success in this direction. It must, however, be remembered that the localities where the phenomenon was presented to most advantage, so far as the altitude of the sun was concerned, are by no means those best provided with astronomical observatories. The ideal place on the globe for witnessing the phenomenon would have been Easter Island; but no one went there. Neither South America nor New Zealand are too far from the best position to render them unfavourable. There is, however, no case in which a really first-rate telescope could have been employed to view the transit under really first-rate conditions as to solar altitude. No considerable expectations need therefore be entertained as to the additions to our knowledge made by the recent transit of Mercury.

#### A MORNING WITH THE SPRINGBOKS.

IN the vast, little-known solitudes of Ngamiland there are few things more strange or more characteristic than those immense saltpans which, like dead and silent seas, lie scattered round about the reed marshes of Lake Komadau and the lower reaches of the Botletli River. Livingstone, with his quick eye and unerring instinct, pointed to these saltpans as the exhausted and dried-up remains of that great inland water which, thousands of years ago—before the Zambezi had been torn from its southern course and deflected eastward—overspread all this part of Southern Africa. He pointed rightly to Lake Ngami as the last puddle of this once mighty lake. Since Livingstone's first discovery of Ngami in 1849 the truth of his early theory has become more and more apparent to the few travellers and hunters who have visited this flat and desolate, yet interesting, region.

"Saltpan" (*zoutpan*) is a rough-and-ready name given to all such kindred formations by the South African Boers. But it is not to be supposed that pure salt is readily to be found upon all. Upon some pans, it is true—such as that of Groot Chwaing in British Bechuanaland—large quantities of good rough salt are collected, to be sold among up-country farmers. Upon others very beautiful masses of crystallized salt are to be found. These crystal lumps, formed by the steady evaporation of nature, are highly prized by the natives, who use them in their kraals, and carry them upon distant journeys. The commonest form of pan in Ngamiland

shown after the rains a strong exudation of lime, which under the action of sun and wind mingles with the desert sand, and gives to the even floor of the pan the smoothest and most silvery appearance possible. During the rains the pans are covered with a few inches of water, and look like immense lakes. From May to November they are dry again. During this dry period of African winter, when not a drop of rain may be expected to mar their surface, the salt-pans assume their most characteristic aspect. At this time the game come in to lick the brack, for which they have so keen a longing. Then the intense heat, and the smooth white saline tracts, unite to form the most wonderful mirages that one can find in Africa. Shining waters, lovely islets, groves of trees and bush—all these appear to the human eye with every circumstance of truth and perfection. Livingstone himself and his fellow-discoverers of Lake Ngami were completely deceived by the vast salt-pan of N'Chukutsa, which they stumbled upon after crossing the waterless Kalahari. One emerges suddenly upon N'Chukutsa, which is some twenty miles round, after a long weary trek through dense Mopani forest. It was evening, and the setting sun threw a wonderful mirage upon the pan. It looked exactly like a lake. Oswell threw his hat in the air and gave a great cry; Livingstone and Murray came hurrying up; all thought they had found Ngami, the fabulous water of which they were in search. Alas! Lake Ngami lay still a weary 250 miles and more in front of them, and they were not to set eyes upon it for many days. We first rode across N'Chukutsa—Chukutsa it is nowadays more commonly called—in the heat of noonday. Its mirage was wonderful. The water, the islands, the trees, the foliage, were so perfect that one might swear Nature's deception could go no further. But the weary ride over the great dry, burning pan; the smarting dazzle cast up by its smooth, white floor; the suffocating heat, and the labour of riding and leading jaded horses and pack-horses, were all real enough. We were in the middle of a spell of sixty-five miles of utterly waterless country, and we panted for the cool Lake River for which we were riding.

In Livingstone's time all this country of the salt-pans was black with game. No gun had then ever desecrated those remote solitudes. Nowadays, alas! much of the nobler game has gone; the troops of elephants, the sour, bulky rhinoceroses, the thousands of buffalo, then frequenting the banks of the Lake River (Botletli), all have vanished. The shy and timid giraffe, which in Livingstone's day and much later wandered to the very margin of the river, now never crosses the plain, but secludes itself in the dry sanctuaries of the Kalahari forest, twenty or thirty miles to the southward.

Yet though the native gunner, the Trek Boer, and the passing Englishman have driven off and destroyed the grander fauna, this primeval region is still a haunt of the more wary and less easily destroyed game. The rare roan antelope, the gemsbok, the koodoo, the hartebeest, and the ostrich still come at night and early morning to taste the salt brack. The grotesque brindled gnu and the beautifully painted Burchell zebra, and in pursuit of them the lion, still wander over the pans, and leave their spoor upon the smooth white sand; and the fleeting springbok, the very acme and perfection of feral grace and motion, may be seen at all hours of the day. The springbok dearly loves a salt-pan; its presence adds a singular charm to these flat and dazzling expanses; and in no part of the boundless veldt of Southern Africa are the tricks, the graces, and the marvellous leaping powers of these matchless antelopes more perfectly displayed or more easily to be observed.

Let us stand by the side of a hunter at one of these great salt-pans. It is early morning in the desert, the air is sharp and clear; one may keep up one's coat collar for half an hour yet, and one's coat on for a good hour. It seems but a few minutes since the morning star sprang above the horizon, yet he is now climbing the sky at a pace that seems incredible. Yonder in the East, the great red disk of sun, now half upon the skyline, is painting the heavens most gorgeously. Upward he flings his rosy banners, which flaunt in the pale green sky far towards the zenith. Three hundred yards away there, to the right of the pan, lumbers an old blue wildebeest bull (brindled gnu), who has somehow got our wind, and is cantering off. Let him rip; it is a long, chancy shot, and we shall disturb the springbok. Poor old brute! he is a solitary, and now wanders the veldt alone, unless he can pick up company with an ostrich or

two, or some ancient, similarly exiled, hartebeest. He has been turned out of the troop by the young bulls, as old and worthless, and the days of his pride are gone. He is the rearguard of the game that drank at the river last night; the rest are already far across the plain, trekking for some safe pasture many a mile away. But now, softly; let us peep through the screen of bush between us and the salt-pan. The springbok are there, surely enough—there must be two hundred of them scattered about the pan. The air is translucent; there is not a trace of mirage; at present you may watch the buck and their movements perfectly. What a picture it is! At this moment one could not find a fairer desert-scene south of the Zambesi. Look through the glass, and you may note how the rising sun casts the long shadow of each dainty antelope far across the smooth white sand. Out there to the right there is some fun going on amongst that knot—"klompje" (a little clump) a Boer would call it—of a dozen. Two young rams are striking at each other. See! Some whim has seized the whole group, and they are leaping—leaping from sheer frolic and pleasure. Arching their backs, thrusting down their heads, elevating the curious fan-like blaze of snowy hair that runs down the back, and lies usually concealed, they spring sheer upward, with the impetus of india-rubber balls, eight or ten feet in air. The spring is made from all four feet simultaneously, and the slender legs are stiffened. One buck repeats the leap several times running; then canters off for another part of the pan. He is followed by the rest of the "klompje." Nothing in nature can equal the wonderful agility, speed, sprightliness, and grace of these creatures. And upon this gleaming pan, at this clear hour of sunrise, they stand out in all their perfection; no mirror could display their points better. Some, as you may perceive, stand reflectively here and there. Some, with lowered heads and curiously mincing gait, trot lightly as things of air across the sand. Some are licking at a salt corner of the brack. Here, again, is another band suddenly startled into a leaping fit—"pronken" (pranks) the Boers well call these displays. Such a scene—enacted daily in old Africa these thousands of years past—is worth a year of a man's life in the seething town. Thank God! there are still a few such places of nature left to this poor harried earth of ours! Unhappily, even these cannot last many years longer. But time wears on; the sun grows warmer every instant; you may see the mirage just beginning to dance at the far corner of the pan. Yonder string of pelicans, half a mile in length, stretching out slowly into the desert, tells that the great fisher-birds have breakfasted and are off to digest their meal. The sandgrouse, streaming overhead towards the river, are flying for their morning drink—it must be nearing eight o'clock. The brilliant rollers and the queer, bizarre hornbills in the bush behind us are busy; that troop of guineafowl crossing the open is off for its day of digging. It is time the hunter shot a buck and rode off. He has been watching, with keen enjoyment, for an hour. But, you will say, why destroy the beauty of the scene, the pure freedom of desert life? Alas! men must live. There is nothing at the waggons but zebra meat, uneatable by Europeans. The rifle goes up at the nearest buck, not much more than two hundred and fifty yards away. He is a fat ram, in high condition. With the glass you may note his gleaming rufous coat, the dark chestnut of his flank stripe, the snowwhiteness of his face and belly. He stands there the easiest shot on the pan.

The rifle cracks, the bullet strikes up the white sand beneath the antelope's belly, and ricochets far into the distance. The buck leaps high in air, and trots off. Steady! he is not much alarmed; there is commotion on the pan, but he will not go far yet. He trots jauntily thirty paces, then stands again. This time the bullet strikes home, just behind the shoulder. That terrific impact is too much even for the wonderful vitality of a springbok, and the ram lies there dead upon the pan. The hunter will have springbok fry for breakfast. The hunting pony is mounted, and ridden down to the pan; the buck is picked up and slung behind the saddle, and the hunter strikes for his waggons, a mile away.

The pan is deserted now. Only the dark crimson stain of blood upon the silvery sand, the spoor of horse and man, and the cloud of vultures, already circling in the blue void of sky, tell of this tragedy of sunrise.

## THE NEW ENGLISH ART CLUB.

THE term "Impressionism," like the term "Preraphaelitism," has come to be applied to principles of art differing in many respects from those to which it was originally, and more properly, given. The word is now commonly associated with certain formulated methods, dealing with problems of tone and colour, which are eminently fitted to record some transitory impression of the moment. That the impression to be recorded should be distinct and vivid is, perhaps, even more necessary to the successful practice of these methods than other considerations of a more purely technical kind. It is here precisely that the pictures now on exhibition by the New English Art Club fail, when considered as a whole; there is much that is Impressionistic, but there are but few impressions, distinct and vivid impressions, to be found in these pictures. However, there are not a few exceptions; and it is of these exceptions that we shall speak.

Among the more purely Impressionistic paintings, those by Mr. Walter Sickert are unquestionably the most interesting. The notion of the greenish light on the white building of "L'Hôtel Royal," relieved against the purple sky, and set off by the red figure in the foreground, is admirably conceived; as, also, the solemnity of the architecture in "La Rosace." Yet sometimes these very real impressions fail him. We love the music-hall, and we desire to see it celebrated by the muse of painting. Mr. Sickert could have taken no more august subject than "Sam Collins's, Islington"; yet was it wise on the part of the artist to have chosen that moment precisely when the house has been plunged almost into darkness! We speak feelingly; for, notwithstanding our intimate acquaintance with that "*verum puerum*" in all its thousand aspects, we have yet been unable to discover which of these Mr. Sickert has selected to paint. But even when Mr. Sickert's impressions do not fail him, when they are admirable, as they are in "L'Hôtel Royal" and "La Rosace," he is still content to give us his work in sketches. Will he never paint us a picture? We do not, to revert to a famous metaphor of Mr. Whistler's, we do not ask Mr. Sickert to sit upon the keyboard; but we do suggest to him, and we take the trouble to do so because we admire his work, that it might be well sometimes to touch sufficient notes to produce a complete chord. As it is (and Mr. Sickert will forgive us the poignancy of the remark, on account of the propriety of the simile), his productions are apt to be like Little Tich's short shirts; they begin late, and finish early.

The most ambitious picture in the gallery is M. Paul Helleu's "La Fontaine de Latone, Versailles." The subject of streaming water, seen under many various conditions of light, is a most fortunate one; and M. Helleu appears to fully appreciate its beauty and delicacy; yet his picture is not entirely successful. Treated as he has treated it, the subject is not sufficient to fill the large canvas on which he works; it wants some touch of actual life or human interest to carry off so large a work. Nor is Mr. Steer's picture of "The Japanese Gown" in his happiest manner; the theme is a hackneyed one, and the treatment is somewhat wanting in distinction. The sketches sent by Mr. Sargent are far more interesting, though less important in character. That of a girl in a white dress, seen against a sheet of water in sunshine, is a remarkably dexterous study of a brilliant effect of light.

Of Mr. Rothenstein's paintings we speak with some reticence; for his pastels and drawings in black and white, especially his portraits of men, stand apart by themselves among contemporary English work. To allow that his paintings were equal to his drawings would be to allow them a very large measure of praise. If they are not that, they yet remain among the best things in the room. Indeed, his portrait of Mr. Hacon is nearly as satisfactory in execution as it is in invention. Mr. Furze's masterly portrait of Lord Monteagle should also be mentioned; it is solidly painted, and the character of the head and hand admirably rendered. But, perhaps, the most original and pleasing pictures in the gallery are Mr. Conder's two paintings called "Landscape" and "Marine." They show real design, both in their conception and treatment. Delicate and personal in his methods, Mr. Conder obtains a singular effect of decoration in these works, by bringing his tones and colours

into very subtle relationship with one another. These designs are full of atmosphere; they recall the sense of the sea and the country, and yet they remain purely decorative paintings.

## THE MUSIC-HALLS.

THE music-halls, for the moment, are a little gloomy, a little empty. The same bright crowds are no longer to be seen between the palms and mirrors of the Empire; even the Pavilion is not quite itself; nor has the Alhambra as yet returned to its first estate. One is afraid to walk about, even in a dull interval, for fear of being misunderstood; and one of the reasons which makes the music-hall charming is that it is possible, during a dull interval, to walk about. This is a great resource, for no programme can please everybody in every item. Now at the Tivoli there is a remote bar, where it is possible not to hear Mr. Charles Godfrey. And not to hear Mr. Charles Godfrey is a privilege for which one cannot be too thankful. We are sure that the crusaders against promenades never gave a thought to these innocent advantages and opportunities, which the most respectable frequenter of music-halls may resort to in cases of emergency. Let them think over the matter, and see if we may not still be permitted at least thus much liberty of choice in our amusements.

But it is not only the audience which is a little lacking, a little disconcerted just now; some of the best performers are away. Mr. Chevalier is on tour; Mr. Dan Leno has gone to Manchester; Little Tich to Edinburgh. And what a loss to the amusement and the delight of London is meant by only these three absences! Of late Mr. Chevalier has been scarcely his earlier self; he has more or less abandoned the Romeo and Juliet of the coster for the Darby and Joan of the more conventional working classes. But he has still his earlier songs, and these are worth all other music hall songs put together. Then in Mr. Dan Leno we have an impromptu artist in fantastic comedy who is unique in his kind. He has never been taken as seriously as he deserves; and, indeed, his somersaults of sentiment, his acrobatics of wit, are enough to dizzy the brain of the soberest critic. Calm appreciation is impossible; you are compelled to laughter, shaken with irresponsible merriment. Little Tich, in another way, is not less amusing; though with him the laughter is not at wit, but at the embodied grotesque, an impossible physical extravagance. Still, it is true that Miss Bessie Bellwood and Miss Marie Lloyd have returned to us. Both, in the past, have done admirable and amusing things; and the latter is now relying chiefly on her earlier songs. Miss Marie Lloyd has always been clever, and she has always been popular. She is becoming, in her way, an artist; becoming quieter, more calculated in her effects, more completely mistress of a piquant method. To begin with, you can always hear every word she says, and you are left in no doubt as to the precise intention with which she says it. No one else is so clever in suggesting a *sous-entendre*; every trick of her face and voice has its meaning and its under-meaning; no phrase was ever so innocent that she would not pass it on to you as an insinuation. The talent is a rare one in England; let us welcome it for what it is worth. With Miss Bessie Bellwood we are in quite another atmosphere. She is hearty, British, sympathetically vulgar, full of dash and bounce, scoring her points loudly, carrying you away by the vividness of her humanity and the surprise of her ready humour. There is something wholesome and likeable about her; when she flounders, you laugh, and are sorry; when she hits straight, you are forced to applaud her. With all her slap-dash method, there is a singular closeness to nature in her fantastically humorous studies of drunken persons who have known better days, actresses down on their luck, or (as in her latest song) cabbies who have got mixed ideas as to the privileges of serving as coachman to a "pro." But her great success with the public is due to her happy faculty of making friends with it. Her songs generally resolve themselves into a conversation between stage and stalls. At such moments she is inimitable, for it is nature itself which speaks. The conventions, whether of art or of manners, are forgotten. We get the naked truth. And, ah, with what relief such little, unexpected episodes come to us, weary, perhaps, of a certain monotony even in the agreeable numbers of a stated programme! These are among the consolations of the music-halls.

## SOME VIRTUOSOS.

**P**ERHAPS some of us wondered why Mr. Schulz-Curtius included such a production as Mr. August Wilhelmj's *Festival March* in the programme of his Wagner concert on Tuesday last, and how Mr. Mottl brought himself to conduct it. It was long, tedious, vulgar; and certain bars of it may be recommended to the Salvation Army. Nearly every one in Queen's Hall smiled or became sleepy: Mottl alone was alert, serious, enthusiastic, and apparently happy—for the smile of the audience indicated something very like contempt. Assuming, as we must, that we were right, that the contempt was merited, why did Mottl conduct that wonderful circus March as though it were a serious piece of music? The answer is that in Mottl we have a virtuoso; and the virtuoso, in every age and clime, seeks to express himself in the manner of the performance, rather than to publish the personality of the composer as manifested in the matter performed. That, even more than phenomenal technique, is the mark of the virtuoso. Hence, while we yawned, Mottl found a delight in phrasing, in securing gradations or sudden contrasts of light and shade, in drawing forth ever-changing varieties of tone-colour, and hardly appeared to consider whether or not the material on which he worked was worthless. But he is essentially of the modern type of virtuoso: beneath his special gift of virtuosity he has a lesser one of pure musicianship—musicianship that would serve as the sole stock-in-trade of a smaller artist; and in this he resembles Paderewski. Indeed, the pure virtuoso, the mere player of fireworks, is a little out of fashion: he goes to America, or teaches in our academies, and rarely appears on the concert-platform. It is evident that both the virtuoso Mottl and Mottl the musician find their highest and fullest opportunity in Wagnerian music. On Tuesday night one was apt to plunge into rapturous superlatives over the superb playing of the slightly improper Venusburg music from *Tannhäuser*, of the Walkürenritt, and the finales to the *Rheingold* and *Götterdämmerung*; while the *Leonora* Overture (No. 3) most decidedly gave one pause. When, earlier in the year, Mottl did not quite succeed with Berlioz, we said he "Germanized" the music; but after the *Leonora* Overture it is plainly to be seen that he had only "Mottled" it. In that Overture the essentially personal nature of his art was revealed in a somewhat startling light. All that is hotly passionate, energetic, heroic, brilliant in sentiment and colour—which is to say, all that is Mottl—was clearly and cleanly brought out; while the mystery, womanly tenderness, the wondrous wayward blending of humour and sadness, and above all the majestic dignity—things characteristic of Beethoven, but not of Mottl—were hardly so much as hinted at. But it must not be thought that Mottl is personal in any small sense. In the Venusburg music and the Walkürenritt his power was shown less in driving his men and working himself up, than in restraining both himself and them, and in each case the result was magnificent. He puts a new meaning into the old paradox—he loses himself to find himself, speaks his personality most plainly when he most suppresses himself, and seems, to the superficial glance, rigidly, colourlessly impersonal. The spirit of self-effacement, indeed, is always strong upon this highly personal conductor. Sometimes he hardly stirs while the band plays long passages, or his left hand flutters slightly to indicate the general time; and in this he may be compared with those galvanic conductors who cannot let a bar pass without proclaiming by many fatuous, ineffectual waggles of the stick, "*I am here!*" The person of such conductors is sufficiently evident to the eye, but their personality is rarely felt in the music. And Mottl not only subordinates himself to himself—on occasion he suffers others to press him into the background. In the *Götterdämmerung* scene Miss Marie Brema, as Brünnhilde, was as grandly tragic, as tenderly exultant, as the shade of Wagner could wish; and Mottl followed her with such abject submission, and so kept down his orchestra, that dramatically the scene gained immensely, while the rich tones of the singer's voice made an effect far surpassing that heard when the same scene was recently given under Siegfried Wagner. To finish with an overwhelmingly successful concert, Miss Agnes Jansen, Miss Evangeline Florence, Madame Minna Fischer, and Messrs. Ludwig, Wareham, and Barlow were helpful in the *Rheingold* finale; and the band, an extravagantly good one, only ran away once, and made no other important slip. A prelude by Chabrier turned out to be well meant rather

than an achievement in art; and this, together with that afore-mentioned March, made the only cold moments of a glowing and—surely!—historic evening.

Mottl, we have said, is a personal conductor; Richter is impersonal. The former is more virtuoso than musician; the latter more musician than virtuoso. Virtuoso he indeed is; but he devotes that side of him to seeking out and exhibiting the personality of the composer, and thinks at least as much of the matter performed as of the manner of performance. In Mr. Henschel we have a conductor who is hard to classify. Aggravatingly personal he often is—to the eye; but his personality seems never to get further than the end of his stick. He is an excellent musician, and undoubtedly sees in the score many a latent effect: yet seems to have not the remotest idea how to get one of them. To conduct is to play that complex instrument the orchestra; and the truth is, Mr. Henschel has not yet acquired any degree of technique. To use the pianist's terminology, he has no "touch." On Thursday evening last he was most successful in Mendelssohn's Scotch Symphony, but even then his gradations were crude; he did not fetch out one of those clear whispered pianissimos that we get from the masters—from Mottl, Richter, Manns; nor was his conception of the work specially inviting. In fact, the renderings of all the orchestral numbers were dull and dispiriting, the tone of the wind and brass of Mr. Henschel's Scotch players being deplorable; and neither the colourless violin playing of Mr. Rivarde nor the too violent singing of Mr. Mockbridge helped to make the concert more cheerful.

In Mr. Manns we have a musician who can conduct rather than a virtuoso of the orchestra, and consequently no more conscientious readings of the classical masters can be heard anywhere than at the Crystal Palace. Not that he fails with Wagner and "the moderns," for Mr. Manns is as fine an all-round conductor as ever lived; but he does not throw himself into that kind of music with the instinctive ardour of Mottl. On Saturday last his most notable feat was a rendering of Schumann's second Symphony, almost unprecedented for puissant energy, and next to that, an almost equally fine reading of Brahms's Academic Overture. Some day we shall discuss Mr. Manns and his method at the length they deserve; for the present it is only possible to say of this concert that a new Scotch overture by Mr. W. Wallace was not over-stimulating, while an old Air and Bourrée from Handel's concertos seemed fresh as on the day they were written. Mr. Sauret played a harmless but brilliant concerto for violin by Moszkowski and an "Elégie et Rondo"—a curious production—of his own. Miss Esther Palliser should never have introduced that drawing-room ballad by Hope-Temple, especially after her exquisitely delicate and expressive singing in Massenet's "O Bien-aimé."

So much has been written, and so foolishly, about Rubinstein that our impressions of the man are likely to be a little confused. When we calmly examine his actual achievement as a pianist and a creative musician, the first thing that strikes us is that in neither capacity was he, in any sense, an innovator. He followed so close upon Liszt that in pianoforte technique nothing was left him to do. But what Liszt had built up he used in a manner that Liszt himself could not have equalled. Liszt's fire—though the statement seems self-contradictory—was fire of the intellect: indeed, we may doubt whether he possessed much fire at all, whether abnormal keenness of brain rather than heat was not his potent characteristic. At least his sympathy with the great masters was principally intellectual. He regarded them with astonishing insight, it is true, but from outside; and when he played it was to display himself very much more than to interpret them. Not so Rubinstein. He was an emotional giant. His emotional nature continually smouldered at a dull red heat, but when the breath of another composer's inspiration blew upon the mass, it flared up and the conflagration was always impressive and sometimes surprising. He then saw the master-works from inside—he made us feel that here were the very thoughts and emotions of the composer, not of the virtuoso. Hence above all things he was a great interpreter—perhaps the greatest interpreter who has lived. As a composer he must be ranked much lower. He never invented a great melody. Melody he had: it flowed in an abundant pellicid stream, and its flavour was frequently piquant; and where piquancy without the grander qualities will satisfy, then Rubinstein is delightful. His small things—those

that he probably regarded as of little account—are unique and invaluable. But his large works simply represent enormous waste of energy; and ten years hence no one will know their names. Some men speak in prose and some in verse, some in marble and some in brass, some in song and some in epic; and for the epic Rubinstein had no gift, but he sang divine songs.

## MONEY MATTERS.

### ACTIVITY IN NEW ISSUES.

**N**EW Companies are being brought out in far larger numbers now than at any time since the Baring collapse just four years ago. This was to be expected. During the four years before the Baring crisis the country wasted immense sums in rash investments abroad, chiefly in South America, and the thrifty classes likewise lost considerable sums in joint-stock concerns at home, mainly Trusts. For a considerable time afterwards the public was not in a position to speculate or to encourage new enterprises. Many had lost the greater part of their fortunes. Some of the very greatest houses in the City had been actually ruined; others had lost heavily. As a natural consequence, there was widespread distrust, and every one was more intent on saving than on attempting to make money. Then there followed in quick succession the insolvency of several foreign States, and at length the "crash" of the Australian Banks. Now the public has come to believe that not only is the worst over, but that recovery has set in. Here at home credit is once more good, and trade is slowly improving. In South America an arrangement has been made with the Argentine Government, and is being fairly well carried out. The period of revolution in Brazil seems at an end, and the country is doing an immense trade. Matters are not looking so well either in Australasia or the United States; and Spain and Italy are in a bad way. But for all that there is a great improvement compared with a few years ago. Meanwhile the country has been saving on an immense scale, and now people are plucking up courage, and are looking about for some way of employing their money safely and profitably. All the really best securities are extravagantly high. The condition of the Continent is too dangerous to tempt investment there, and consequently people have to turn to entirely new enterprises if they are to get large returns. One other influence that is operating powerfully is the great increase in the outturn of gold, especially in South Africa. It is now yielding as much, or almost as much, as the United States itself, and every month the output is augmenting; while it is believed that goldfields as yet untouched are nearly as rich as those which are being worked. The increase in the gold output promises to end the scramble for gold, and must by-and-by very greatly stimulate every kind of business. As already said, there has been hardly any speculation during the past four years, and exceedingly little new enterprise. The savings of this country alone during four years are immense in amount, and the rest of the world has been saving as well as we. One consequence is that the accumulation of money in all the great financial centres—London, Paris, Berlin, New York, and so on—has been rarely equalled; and the accumulation is being made more visible by the extraordinary output of new gold in South Africa, in America, and in Australia. Under these circumstances it was inevitable that new enterprises should be engaged in. It is well for the world that they should be. Without new enterprise the increased population of the world could not be employed; and, therefore, so long as ordinary judgment is employed, the more new enterprises are encouraged the better it is for all. But many promoters are either oversanguine or unscrupulous, and it would be well, therefore, for the public to exercise due caution. Not very long ago we warned them that as yet we have not sufficient information respecting the Western Australian goldfields to justify us in subscribing largely to the multitudes of new Companies that are now being brought out. That Western Australia is rich in gold seems to be proved; but there is no evidence to satisfy a cautious man that gold exists in many of the properties which are being offered for sale in London. Of course, this is only true in a general way. The vendors of the

Londonderry mine, for example, are men of such position that it is not to be supposed they would allow false statements respecting a property to be laid before the public. That the mine is, therefore, all that it is represented to be is possible. And yet we venture to think that the capital asked for is altogether excessive. 700,000/- for a mining claim of 25 acres seems to us overmuch, even though the specimens of ore exhibited are extraordinarily rich, and the reports of mining experts are most satisfactory. We further venture to think that the working capital retained is too small—only 50,000/- out of the 700,000/- asked from subscribers. And the public, it seems, agree with us. The subscriptions to this mine have not been so large as the market expected. The influence of names such as those of Lord Fingall, Colonel North, and Lord de Grey has not been sufficient to outweigh the evil of over-capitalization. A property bought for 230,000/- and offered to the public for 700,000/- might pay the public or it might not, but it would be certain to pay its promoters. It is reported that not more than 120,000 shares have been applied for. But the balance has perhaps been placed among Colonel North's following in the nitrate market, and will no doubt be so closely held that the venturesome dealers who have sold "bears" may find it difficult to buy back at a profit, or indeed without loss. There are cases of mines in which there is a very strong suspicion of fraud, and these the public should carefully avoid. There are still others, where perhaps there is nothing worse than too great readiness to believe the best. The rush of new Companies is likely to be followed before long by a considerable number of foreign loans. It is notorious that several Governments are preparing to convert their debts, and it is strongly believed that several others are about to borrow. There seems especially strong reason to believe that Russia will raise a large loan before long. Last week she sent 800,000/- in gold into the Bank of England, and for two or three weeks back she has been sending still larger amounts into the Imperial Bank of Germany. Within the past two or three weeks, indeed, Russian gold, amounting to about 4 millions sterling, has been received by the Imperial Bank of Germany. Naturally all this is believed to be in preparation for a large coming loan. Russian securities are held in large amounts all over the Continent, and Russia buys munitions of war and stores upon the Continent. She has, therefore, always large sums to pay, especially in France and Germany, and it is quite possible that she may require to strengthen her balances. But that would not require 5 millions sterling in the course of a few weeks, and, therefore, it is generally understood by the well-informed that the markets are being prepared for a large operation. Whether the loan will be offered in London does not seem very certain yet; probably not. But in Paris and Berlin it certainly will be offered, and there seems no reason to doubt that it will be largely subscribed. Austria-Hungary, too, will soon borrow; France, of course, is always borrowing; and Germany will have to borrow a considerable sum. The Government of the United States is borrowing at this moment, but most of the money is being found at home; and there is not a Government in South America that would not be glad to be able to borrow. But the ability of those Governments is not very great. Brazil, however, will be a borrower before very long; and so, perhaps, will Chili.

It was announced on Thursday morning that a syndicate had been formed to repay to the Bank of England the debt due from the Baring estate and to take over the assets for the purpose of holding them for better prices. Thus, so far as the public is concerned, the Baring liquidation is brought to an end. The matter is not of much real importance. The debt due from the estate, which was originally very nearly 21 millions, has now been reduced to about a million and a half; and it has been evident for a considerable time past that when the liquidation was at last ended there would be a surplus. Still, the announcement is likely to have a very beneficial effect in the City. In the first place, it relieves the guarantors from all liability, and that is of importance, although the liability was more nominal than real. Still, the fact that there was liability had a disturbing influence. Secondly, the Bank of England is paid a very large sum, which it can employ as it pleases. And, thirdly, the success with which the liquidation has been carried out so far vindicates the policy taken when the crisis occurred, and proves that confidence has now revived. Besides, it is

gratifying to believe that the assets will be taken care of, so that the families of the old partners in Baring Brothers will ultimately come in for a surplus.

During the week ending Wednesday night over three-quarters of a million has been withdrawn from the Bank of England for abroad. In consequence there has been a rise in the rates of interest and discount—not a very considerable rise, however, but still an advance that shows the foreign demand is beginning to tell upon our market. The general impression is that the United States Loan will not very materially benefit the Treasury. The American banks are likely to take the greater part, if not the whole, of the loan. But the American banks are withdrawing gold in very large amounts from the Treasury to make the payments, which is not satisfactory from the Treasury point of view. That being so, the impression gains strength that there will be large exports of gold from New York early in the year, and that consequently the accumulations of the metal in Europe will tend to increase. While this opinion holds, it is not probable that there can be very much rise in the rates of interest and discount.

The India Council continues to sell its drafts successfully. It is accepting lower prices, but still it is selling freely. It offered for tender as usual on Wednesday 40 lakhs of rupees and sold the whole amount at a slight fraction under 12. 1*1/4*d. per rupee. Trade in India is very dull; rates there are very low; and up to the present time there is no sign of much improvement. The silver market is likewise dull. The price is fluctuating about 29d. per ounce; but as the mining Companies are not selling freely, the falling off in the demand has not as much influence upon the price as might have been expected.

Early in the week there was a general slackening of business upon the Stock Exchange, with some fall in prices. The mining and industrial markets, which have been so very active and so very confident, shared in the general decline. Since then, however, there has been a recovery. Now Western Australian Gold Companies are again coming out in considerable numbers, and the investment in South African shares is very large. The outturn in South Africa is steadily increasing. Immense fortunes have been made by those capitalists who took the trouble to inform themselves upon the spot and who had the courage to invest money largely. These great capitalists seem to believe that the production will continue to augment for a long time to come. All of them, therefore, are holding the shares which they already have, and very many of them are increasing their interest. At the same time the syndicates which have been formed upon the Continent, especially in Paris and Berlin, are buying upon an immense scale; and the general investing public, unable to find what have long been considered good securities that yield them a satisfactory return, are, and for some time past have been, investing freely. As observed above, the accumulation of unemployed money is very large, and the public is naturally, therefore, attracted by the high dividends that the best managed South African mines are paying. Upon the Continent there has also been a recovery in what are called Inter-Bourse securities—the securities that are largely dealt in upon the Continental Bourses. For a very considerable time past there has been a rather wild speculation in Austria and Hungary, due partly to a great improvement in trade, and partly to the success with which the Government has been able to get large amounts of gold for the reform of the currency. For some time the operators in Berlin looked upon the speculation in Austria as reckless; but quite recently the Berlin market has been growing more active. During the past few weeks the Russian Government has remitted to Berlin about 4 millions sterling in gold, and as the accumulation of unemployed money was large before, this remittance has tended to stimulate investment and speculation. The object of the Russian Government, as stated above, is believed to be to prepare the way for a large loan; and that it is succeeding is shown by the greater activity in Berlin and likewise in Paris. On the other hand, matters do not improve in the United States. As above observed, there is friction between the Treasury and the banks, the Treasury desiring to get about 12 millions sterling of fresh gold and the banks endeavouring to withdraw gold from the Treasury for the purpose

of paying it in again. Further, trade is very bad and the earnings of the railway Companies are small, while the opposition made to the various attempts at reorganizing insolvent railway companies is discouraging investors. For example, the great majority of shareholders and bondholders of the Erie Company long ago approved the plan of reorganization proposed by Messrs. Drexel Morgan; but a small minority has opposed, and has taken the matter into the Courts, with the result that the interest which was expected in July has not been paid, and that probably also the January coupon will be passed. The opposition to the Reading and the Atchison plans is so strong, that at present it does not look as if they can be carried out, and so the settlement of the various railway questions appears as far off as ever. Little progress, too, is made with the settlement of the Argentine railway guarantees, the Minister of Finance strongly opposing. But the prospect in Brazil has distinctly brightened. The new President was last week quietly installed in office, and trade is prosperous. The news from Australia is disquieting. Ever since the crisis last year trade has been extremely depressed, and now some of the reconstructed banks are again being talked of.

The amalgamation of the London and Midland Bank with the Preston Banking Company is announced. The London and Midland has a subscribed capital of nearly four millions, 818,000*l.* being called up, and a reserve of 600,000*l.* It has 83 branches and 22 sub-branches. The Preston Banking Company has a capital of 196,000*l.* paid up and a reserve fund of 185,000*l.* It has 11 branches and 15 sub-branches.

Consols closed on Thursday at 103, a rise compared with the preceding Thursday of  $\frac{1}{2}$ ; Indian Sterling Threes closed at 102 $\frac{1}{4}$ , a rise of  $\frac{1}{2}$ ; New South Wales Three and a Halfs closed at 102, a rise of  $\frac{1}{4}$ ; and Queensland Three and a Halfs closed at 99 $\frac{1}{2}$ , a rise of  $\frac{1}{2}$ . In the Home Railway market Caledonian Undivided closed at 124 $\frac{1}{2}$ , a rise of  $\frac{1}{2}$ ; and North-Western closed at 176, also a rise of  $\frac{1}{2}$ ; North-Eastern closed at 163, a rise of 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ ; and South-Western closed at 192, a rise of 2; but North Staffordshire closed at 127, a fall of 1; and Brighton "A" closed at 155 $\frac{1}{4}$ , a fall of 2. In the American market Atchison Gold Mortgage Four per Cents closed on Thursday at 68, a fall compared with the preceding Thursday of 2; Baltimore and Ohio shares closed at 69, also a fall of 2; Illinois Central shares closed at 92 $\frac{1}{2}$ , likewise a fall of 2; Canadian Pacific shares closed at 60 $\frac{1}{2}$ , a fall of 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ ; Milwaukee shares closed at 60 $\frac{1}{2}$ , a fall of 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ ; and Lake Shore shares closed at 137 $\frac{1}{2}$ , a fall of 3. In the South American department Buenos Ayres and Rosario Ordinary stock closed on Thursday at 67, a fall compared with the preceding Thursday of 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ ; Central Argentine Ordinary closed at 65, a fall of 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ ; and the Argentine Funding Bonds closed at 71 $\frac{1}{2}$ , a fall of  $\frac{1}{2}$ . In the Inter-Bourse department French Threes closed at 101 $\frac{1}{2}$ , a fall of  $\frac{1}{2}$ ; Russian Fours closed at 102, a rise of  $\frac{1}{4}$ . In the South African department De Beers Diamond shares closed at 17 $\frac{1}{2}$ , a fall of 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ ; Afrikander closed at 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ , a rise of  $\frac{1}{2}$ ; but Consolidated Deep Levels closed at 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ , a fall of  $\frac{1}{2}$ .

## REVIEWS.

### POLITICS AND LITERATURE.

#### PEN DRAWING.

*Pen Drawing and Pen Draughtsmen; their Work and their Methods. A Study of the Art of To-day; with Technical Suggestions.* By JOSEPH PENNELL, Lecturer on Illustration at the Slade School, University College. London and New York: Macmillan & Co. 1894.

THIS is the second edition of a work which first appeared in 1889; but the author assures us, in the preface to this new issue, that it "is really a new book," and as such, therefore, we propose to review it. He also tells us that in the former edition "the mistakes were many, in facts, not in theories, and there were more notable artists omitted than admitted, almost. However," Mr. Pennell complains, "no one pointed these things out, and it has been left for me to correct and amplify my facts, and hunt up new and old draughtsmen." This statement will

the critic much labour and not a little misgiving. It will be no longer necessary for him to examine the astonishing theories with which this volume abounds, since all are correct ; and he will contentedly await the gratitude of Mr. Pennell, should he be fortunate enough to discover any trifling error of fact which may still linger in its pages.

Mr. Pennell dismisses the pen-and-ink drawings of the Old Masters in his first twenty pages ; yet these few pages are the most instructive in the book. They do not tell us anything about the Old Masters ; but they contain a vast amount of information about Mr. Pennell, his natural bent of mind, his tastes, his learning. Let us take some one passage from his book on this subject of the Old Masters as a specimen of the rest. " I have seen no reason," he tells us, " to change my views regarding the old men. . . . I said, and I still say, that Dürer, Rembrandt, Bellini, and Holbein were the greatest pendraughtsmen among the old men, though at times Mantegna, Botticelli, Carmagnola, and, upon a few rare occasions, Raphael, when he took the trouble, approached them. But none of them equalled the best men. Later on Van Eyck, Jan Wierix, and Canaletto made some attempts, mostly in the wrong direction."

It is not quite clear whom Mr. Pennell intends by the name *Bellini* ; if we consult his index it would seem to be Giovanni Bellini ; but, if we consult pages 8 and 12 of his book, then Gentile Bellini. What is, however, quite certain from this statement is that Mantegna, for instance, never equalled as a pen-draughtsman either Giovanni or Gentile. This, of course, is not a fact, but one of those theories of Mr. Pennell's, in which, as he himself tells us, he never makes a mistake. Again, Mantegna we know, and Botticelli we know, but who is *Carmagnola*? The word is not printer's error for *Campagnola*, for it occurs in the index spelled in the same way ; and we can only regret that Mr. Pennell has not told us something about the discovery (or was it a theory?) by which this master became known to him. But the most astounding statement of all in this paragraph is the sentence which informs us that Van Eyck (by whom we can only understand John or Hubert Van Eyck) lived and worked subsequently to Raphael. At first it would seem that the word was another printer's error for Van Dyck ; but again the index shows us that this is not so. It is impossible that Mr. Pennell can allude either to Gaspar or Nicholas Van Eyck, the painters of battle-pieces by sea and land. Indeed, what does he intend ? But that is not so much to our present purpose ; it does not greatly concern us to know whether these mistakes have arisen from gross carelessness or from gross ignorance on the part of Mr. Pennell. What we are concerned to know is, whether this passage is an example of the history and criticism of art, as he teaches them, in his capacity as Lecturer on Illustration at the Slade School, University College?

It may be instructive to note a few more of Mr. Pennell's theories, in which he is never mistaken, concerning the Old Masters : " I have had a process made from Vandyck's etching of the head of Snyders, and it is upon his etchings that Vandyck's reputation as a black-and-white man rests. I have placed with it two heads by F. Desmoulins from *La Vie Moderne*, which I think any one must admit are quite equal to Vandyck's work, and yet utterly different." We have no hesitation in saying that these heads by Desmoulins show neither knowledge, nor any sense of style or beauty ; they possess no quality of art whatever, except a certain facility of a superficial kind ; yet Mr. Pennell is able to write of them in this fashion. " The smaller drawing is as full of character and the modelling as well given as in the Vandyck ; in the larger one the feeling of flesh is far more completely carried out than in the Vandyck, while the hair, moustache, and imperial, somewhat similar in both, are vastly better rendered by Desmoulins. Here is a man who, I venture to say, is almost unknown, and yet in black-and-white he has surpassed Vandyck with his world-wide reputation."

Let us take yet another instance, in which he theorizes about a great living artist, and one of the greatest artists of all time, and then we have done. Speaking of Maxime Lalanne, Mr. Pennell remarks that " His ability to express a great building, a vast town, or a delicate little landscape has never been equalled, I think, by anybody but Whistler. To a certain extent he was mannered ; so was Rembrandt ; Whistler is the only man I know of who is not." How gratifying this must be to Mr. Whistler ; and yet it is insignificant to what Mr. Pennell has elsewhere to say of him : " No man among the ancients is greater than Rembrandt as an etcher, but Whistler, in his etchings of Old London, is even greater than Rembrandt. Therefore, if you wish a simple style, good for all times, you will find it in many of these landscape and figure subjects of Rembrandt's. But for work of to-day, and

Rembrandt gave the things that were about him, the student would learn more from the work of Whistler ! " The insinuation is sufficiently unkind ; but still Mr. Pennell " goes one better." He is describing two drawings by William Small. " The style," he remarks, " of both resembles the early Keene's, Whistler's, and Du Maurier's. Who was the inventor of this style I do not know." And so Mr. Whistler and Mr. Du Maurier once worked in a common style ! And so much so, that Mr. Pennell is unable to tell " which of them invented the other ! "

We now turn to the principal part of Mr. Pennell's subject—the work of contemporary draughtsmen. " I hold," he says, " that, if writers would only pay some slight attention to what is going on around them, and stop disputing over the unknowable and undiscoverable in the past, they would at least collect data which would serve as a basis for historians of art in the future." Again the critic should be very grateful to Mr. Pennell, for he has supplied the criterion by which he would have his work examined.

The only indication to be found in this volume of any plan or method which may have been observed by the writer in its composition is the division of the artists into groups, according to their nationalities. But even in so simple a proceeding as this mistakes are to be found. Thus the well-known artist, J. F. Raffaelli, of Paris, is placed among Italian draughtsmen. Of Italian descent M. Raffaelli assuredly is ; but he was not only born but bred in France, and to place him among the Italians, as Mr. Pennell places him, and afterwards to remark that his drawings are " more like German work than Italian," does not appear to us the best way to " collect data which would serve as a basis for historians of art in the future." With the exception of this division of the artists according to their nationalities, Mr. Pennell has put his book together entirely without order or method. He selects the artists and the examples of their work, apparently, at hazard, or with a want of proper knowledge ; and the remarks which accompany the drawings contain little or nothing except the infallible theories of their writer. We turn, for example, to p. 138, which contains a reproduction of a drawing by Corot, and a note in which Mr. Pennell can find nothing more to say about this great master than that he " died before process was perfected." With this drawing by Corot before us we naturally look for the work of his contemporaries (some of whom were more conspicuous for their pen-and-ink drawings even than he), of Delacroix, Millet, Rousseau, and of how many less distinguished men. If the work of Corot is to be represented, on what principle is the work of these men to be omitted ? On the following page is a drawing by Puvis de Chavannes, a master who has made only a few studies in pen-and-ink of an unimportant character ; whereas there is another French master, Gustave Moreau, who is equally distinguished with Puvis de Chavannes, but to whom Mr. Pennell does not make a single allusion of any sort or kind. Moreau's pen-and-ink studies are among his finest productions, and some of them are comparable on account of their style, knowledge, and sense of beauty to the drawings of the great Italians. Why have we no example of Gustave Moreau's work here ? True it is that Mr. Pennell tells us that, through no fault of his own, he leaves the work of several Frenchmen unrepresented ; but who are the artists whose work he was unable to illustrate ? " Louis Legrand, Lautrec, Ibels, and a few others."

Following the drawing by Puvis de Chavannes is one by Bastien-Lepage. Although Mr. Pennell professes to be concerned only about pen-work, he has selected a drawing in which pen, crayon, and wash have all been employed ; whereas there are some admirable drawings of still life by this artist done only with the pen. Finally, in order to mark his sense of Corot, Puvis de Chavannes, and Bastien-Lepage as artists, he places them between such men as Gerbaudi and Surand. The instance which we have adduced is not an extraordinary one ; everywhere in Mr. Pennell's book do we meet with the same ignorant omissions, the same chaotic methods, the same utter incompetency to deal with its subject. There is one lapse, the most surprising of all, in Mr. Pennell's account of the French school ; and of this it is impossible not to speak. He not only gives no example, but makes not even a reference, to the drawings in pen-and-ink of Auguste Rodin, although he devotes a chapter to the subject of drawings of sculpture. At Paris, the amateurs vie with one another to possess a book whose margins have been enriched with the *croquis* of this great artist ; and, indeed, these drawings are known and admired wherever good art is appreciated.

We regret that we are unable further to gratify Mr. Pennell, by putting into practice his convenient theory, that it is the duty of critics to correct the errors, and supply the omissions, of a writer, in order that he may pass off such corrections and omissions as

his own in the next edition of his work. Unfortunately we are not called upon to instruct Mr. Pennell, but to expose his pretensions; and the first pages of his volume are more than sufficient for that purpose. The tests which we have applied to his book are of the most elementary kind, tests of fact; such as a schoolmaster would apply to a boy's exercise. We have not applied to it any tests of fine criticism, because his work is so clumsy that an attempt to do this would become ridiculous. Wanting, as Mr. Pennell wants, both judgment and a knowledge of the history of art, the one course left to him was to have collected and arranged encyclopedically trustworthy information concerning contemporary artists, with examples of their work; to have brought together, as he himself puts it, "data which would serve as a basis for historians of art in the future." This he has not done; he prefers to attempt the difficult business of the critic. But vulgarity and coarseness, heaped upon ignorance, are not the qualities which distinguish either good criticism or good literature. Of Mr. Pennell's methods of writing it has not been necessary here to speak, for we have given copious extracts from his book. He puts together his words and sentences, as he puts together his "theories" and materials: the former in disregard of grammar; the latter in disregard of design.

When Mr. Pennell prints his book on a heavy, clayed paper, and tells us that hand-made paper, made of linen rags, is "bad paper," because it is not adapted to the last cheap makeshift of the "process" printer; when he informs us that "a print from a photogravure of a pen-drawing is really of as much value as the print from an etching," it is not a matter of any real concern to the world at large to draw attention to his fallacies and his want of taste; but when he pronounces dicta of this kind in the guise of authority as the Lecturer on such subjects at the Slade School, then it becomes a matter of great public concern to see that the best traditions of art are not traduced in our public schools. And, moreover, when Mr. Pennell says that Titian never made a fine drawing, and that the innocent productions of Mr. Alfred Parsons, which are mediocre enough to become the most Philistine of drawing-room tables, surpass those of Albert Dürer; that Mr. Parsons "is able to draw flowers as no one else ever drew them, and to fill his page with the mingling of decoration and realism that Dürer never dreamt of, though his every line is as beautiful as Dürer's"; when Mr. Pennell speaks after this fashion—ignorantly, insultingly—of the most splendid names which adorn the history of art, then the entire world of culture is concerned to rebuke him.

*Εροπίτ' ἀκριτόμυθε, λεγύς περ ἐών ἀγορητής,  
ἰσχεο, μῆδ' έθελ' οἷος ἐριζέμενας βασιλεῦσιν, &c.*

#### A SPECIMEN OF OXFORD EDITING.

*Dryd-n: an Essay of Dramatic Poesy.* Edited, with Notes, by THOMAS ARNOLD, M.A. Oxford: at the Clarendon Press. 1894.

WE have selected this book, for reasons explained elsewhere, as a fair specimen of the way in which Oxford edits an English classic. It is as good, no doubt, as some of the annotated editions with which the poorer kind of publishers crowd our table, and we have no wish to make Mr. Thomas Arnold particularly uncomfortable. The craft of bookmaking is respectable enough in its way, and it is natural and blameless for a man not to put originality or profound erudition into a manual for school use. Scholarship, research, even minute accuracy, are expensive; and a person is not necessarily ignorant or unscrupulous because he does not provide these in doing a job as well as he conveniently can for the sum paid for it. We are more or less acquainted with a *Manual of English Literature* that Mr. Arnold made for Messrs. Longmans; and we would certainly not speak harshly at any length about it. There are blunders enough in it, it is true, and it bears the signs of the scissors on every other page; but it is absurd to grumble at that in books of this sort, or to attack a decent workman, who has done his task as well as most of his fellows, merely for bowing to the necessities of earning an honest living. But the fact that a book bears upon it the imprint of the Clarendon Press ought surely to be some guarantee that it is not below the level of (say) the publications of the "University Correspondence College." It is time for us to insist that the *Dominus Illuminatio Mea* shall no longer cover scamped work, ignorance, and fatuity.

Mr. Arnold prefaces his edition of Dryden's great critical essay with fifteen pages, in which he manages to say not a single word about Dryden as a critic, about the importance of the essay itself in the history of criticism, about its relations to criticism before and after it, or about Dryden as a writer of prose. He might

have done a useful bit of work by way of introduction to this particular book had he confined himself to these topics alone; but surely some guidance concerning them is absolutely necessary in order to introduce it properly to the student. However, we must not trouble much about what Mr. Arnold has left undone; what he has managed to do in these fifteen small pages is more than enough for us. Dryden represents the dialogue taking place on the day of the great battle between the Dutch and English fleets, June 3, 1665; Mr. Arnold's note (p. 130) confounds this with the battle in Southwold Bay in May 1672, nearly five years after the *Essay* was written! On p. 6 we read that "*The Rival Ladies*" is partly in rhyme, partly in blank verse; on p. 139 (in the notes) it is "partly prose, partly rhyme." It would be just as well—for the learner—if Mr. Arnold would stick to one statement or the other, though perhaps it would be better for him to get to the bottom of the mystery, even if that involved the trouble of actually looking into the works of the author whom he is "editing." "Since Dryden's, the only supremely excellent plays which English literature has produced are Sheridan's"; we thought that Congreve's best work was done after Dryden had given up the stage, and we had some such notion about Vanbrugh; we were also under the impression that *She Stoops to Conquer* was written quite a long time after Dryden's death. However, no notion of this seems to have crossed Mr. Arnold's mind when he set about instructing the young in the history of our dramatic literature. "Style belongs to prose; metre, quantity, and rhyme to poetry." One wonders that the Clarendon Press proof-reader did not query this amazing product of hurriedly thoughtless composition; even Mr. Arnold cannot mean to say that there is no such thing as style in poetry. Style, by the way, does not always "belong to prose," as Mr. Arnold shows us, teaching by painful example:—

"Passion," he proceeds, "is too fierce to be bound in fitters; and the sense of Shakspere's unapproachable superiority,—Shakspere, whose masterpieces dispense with rhyme,—inclines him to quit the stage altogether. Nevertheless his original contention,—however under the pressure of dejection, and the sense perhaps of flagging powers, he may afterwards have been willing to abandon it,—cannot be lightly set aside as either weak or unimportant; a point on which I shall have something to say presently."

This is not quite the prose we should expect of the fine flower of Oxford scholarship in English literature. "With us, Shakspere's amazing genius enables us, even without the aid of rhyme, still to enjoy his plays; but this is true of no other dramatist of that age." A footnote modifies this statement in a truly judicial spirit:—"Massinger's *New Way to Pay Old Debts* is perhaps the only exception to the statement in the text." We hoped, until we read that note, that Mr. Arnold was only clumsily stating the tolerably well-known fact that the Elizabethan plays are no longer commonly acted; but it seems that this guide of youth in the study of literature is actually so unfortunate as to think, and so bold as to say, that only Shakspere and a small portion of Massinger, among the "dramatists of that age," are worth reading now. We are afraid that there is no possible doubt as to his meaning. "In his work on the Elizabethan dramatists Charles Lamb produced passages from some of the best plays of all the principal authors; but it must be owned that they make no great impression." On the whole, we should not advise Mr. Arnold to extend his studies in the Elizabethan drama beyond Lamb's specimens; we do not think he would enjoy them much. As far as he can see, "the passion is rather Italian or Spanish than English." The worthy man doubtless thinks he means something. Such wisdom comes of muddling over histories of literature and extract-books. He must have read something somewhere about the origins of some of the plots, and endeavoured in a foggy way to apply it. But perhaps the reader wants no more of Mr. Arnold's fifteen pages. And Mr. Arnold's critical opinions are on a par with his editing. On p. x he is inclined to conclude that, as "no Elizabethan blank-verse tragedies beside Shakspere's can be endured on the stage now," Shakespeare triumphed rather *in spite* of blank verse (the italics are Mr. Arnold's) than *because* of it.

A dozen pages of perfunctory annotation is scarcely worth as many words. What needs elucidation Mr. Arnold neglects (save where it can be cut from Malone); what is unnotable he comments on, and misstatements and silly remarks abound. There is no need to do more than give a specimen or two. This, for instance, is a good note:—"See Valerius Maximus, l. iv. c. 5 (Malone)." If there is anything in the reference, Mr. Arnold ought to have explained it. Does he expect the young student (or the old one, for that matter) to have his *Valerius Maximus* at hand to turn to? On p. 131 he ostentatiously corrects Dryden's τὸ μῆνα into δὲ μῆνα and leaves unnoticed Dryden's

amazing blunder on p. 28, where he identifies the *Actors* of a tragedy with the catastrophe—and this is a Clarendon Press editor!

Then we have such prodigies as the Epicene of Ben Jonson, p. viii, the *Polyeuctus* of Corneille, p. 135, and the like. Mr. Arnold gives us four lines of comment when Dryden uses "exceeding" as an adverb, yet he has no note when Dryden uses such a phrase as "congratulated to the rest," and (what is far worse) he leaves such a word as "Clevelandism" unexplained. What earthly good is an annotator who does not help us in such a matter as this? "See Vell. Patric. i. 16, 17 (Malone)": no doubt for an editor of Mr. Arnold's sort, with Malone's edition beside him, this sort of thing is safer than explaining "Clevelandism" for the benefit of the man who knows nothing of Cleveland. It would be as foolish to require him to trouble about this sort of thing as to expect him to see Dryden's obvious allusion (on p. 48) to Sidney's essay. But surely even Mr. Arnold ought not to invent a new play for Beaumont and Fletcher (*Cornelia*, p. 135); to tell us that "the Promos and Cassandra of Whetstone is in the heroic couplet" (p. 137); to describe the versification and style of *The Bloody Brother* as "both of a low and rude type," and to omit (above all other omissions) all explanation of the constant references to Corneille's essay on the *Unities*.

Enough, and more than enough, of Mr. Arnold. He and his work are of no importance in themselves, and on their own account are not worth our attention. But this book is a sample of the kind of thing both Universities are pouring out. This editor is the kind of "scholar" in English literature whom Oxford and Cambridge delight to breed and to honour. No wonder the better sort of Don rather thinks that there is not much to be done with Literature Triposes and Schools, and that his *Alma Mater* had better leave the whole thing alone.

#### WITH WILSON IN MATABELELAND.

*With Wilson in Matabeleland; or, Sport and War in Zambesia.*  
By Captain C. H. W. DONOVAN. London: Henry & Co. 1894.

CAPTAIN DONOVAN went out to South Africa on a hunting expedition in May 1893 without any expectation of finding himself involved in the Matabele War, of the approach of which there was at that time no indication. His book is, therefore, of special value for the light it throws on the causes that brought about the commencement of hostilities, and on the conduct of the war itself.

His book may conveniently be divided into two parts, the first a record of simple travel and sport, the second a quite independent account of the much criticized and often misunderstood Matabele War.

From May to September 1893 Captain Donovan and his companion, Mr. George Banks, were engaged in the pursuit of game big and small. In the Transvaal they did not expect to find big game; but they shot a few springbucks, and had fair sport with winged game. They were agreeably surprised to meet with koodoo, wildebeest, and leopards, before arriving at the Limpopo River. At the Limpopo Captain Donovan found the Chartered Company's police engaged in enforcing the game laws of the Company on recalcitrant Dutchmen—a very necessary protection of the fauna of the country which would otherwise be quickly exterminated. In this matter of the preservation of game, as, indeed, in everything, the superiority of government by men who know the country and the conditions of every problem, to government by red-tape officialism in London, will be manifest to any unprejudiced reader.

In fly-fishing, which we do not remember to have been indulged in by any other sportsman in this region, Captain Donovan had excellent sport. The chief quarry, the "tiger-fish," ran to 8½ lbs., and afforded nearly as good sport as salmon, being also capital eating. A bag of 76 lbs. was nothing out of the ordinary.

On the Bubyé River the sportsmen fell in with buffalo, of which they killed four. They also heard lions at night, but could not get a shot. A visit to the Umtelique River to shoot hippopotami was eminently successful, though the killing of the sea-cows did not at first commend itself to Maguati, a chief under yearly tribute to Gunghana, the King of Gazaland. Sea-cow shooting Captain Donovan concludes by describing as not very exciting sport, which is not surprising after the account he gives of the butchery. At Ranganas Randt the author began to hear from the natives blood-curdling stories of the Matabele, and saw one of the mutilated survivors of the victims of the Matabele raid on Victoria, who assured him that by the time he arrived there he would not find a white man alive.

The first encounter with lions, "looking in the grey light of the

morning like enormous sheep," is graphically described. Two fine male lions were killed, and if we have to regret that the Kodak was not in evidence during the action, it did its work with excellent result after. On the Wanetzé and Bubyé Rivers a fair amount of big game was found, and the bag up to September 5 amounted to the respectable total of 134 head of big game. It might have been much larger, but "we have," says Captain Donovan, "the satisfaction of knowing that we never wantonly killed an animal"; for his rule was to kill only what was required for specimens or food. Captain Donovan does not seem to have been at all a dead shot; but he is evidently no drawer of the long-bow, and as regards sport, he has the root of the matter in him—love of woodcraft and adventure, and a humane dislike to inflict unnecessary suffering.

In Victoria Captain Donovan found the Matabele scare at its height. He responded to Dr. Jameson's message calling on every one to come in and help to repel the savages, and made himself thoroughly acquainted with the real cause of the war. That cause was beyond any doubt, he tells us, the insolent and savage raids of the Impis, directed against inoffensive Mashonas in the employment and under the protection of the settlers. He testifies to the extraordinary forbearance and self-control shown by the much maligned Captain Lundy and the colonists towards the Matabele raiders, forbearance which no doubt was mistaken for weakness. The panic among the Europeans was a real one. "Day after day I met Dutchmen, and, to my sorrow and their everlasting disgrace, men calling themselves Britishers, flying down country and saying that the Matabele would 'wipe out' Victoria."

At Victoria, however, a strong man had taken in hand the difficult task of dealing with a nation of well-armed savages, and that, too, with the somewhat scanty materials for an army supplied by the colonists themselves. Dr. Jameson, whom Mr. Rhodes, with the insight of a Napoleon, had taken from his medical work at Kimberley to be administrator of Mashonaland, was now to distinguish himself as organizing director of the most brilliantly conducted campaign in all our wars with savages, and spared no pains in making every preparation and providing for every contingency.

It was to the completeness of the precautions taken as much as to the power and well-won prestige of the Maxim guns that the little force of colonists owed their marvellous escape from such disasters as Isandula in their advance against a warlike nation in arms. It is plain from Captain Donovan's record that their possession of rifles and ammunition was a fatal drawback to the Matabele, leading them to put no reliance in their ancient tactics of coming at once to close quarters, and trusting to cold steel. This, we may note incidentally, was predicted years ago by Mr. Rhodes, whose foresight is not the least valuable of his remarkable powers.

Captain Donovan, who was not in the employ of the Chartered Company, was strongly inclined to be a hostile critic; and this attitude of mind was not changed till he saw for himself the atrocities perpetrated by the Matabele, not only on the men but on the defenceless women and children of the Mashonas, and realized how great a deliverance for a numerous population of unwarlike natives would be the breaking up of the Matabele power. He shows himself a fair and trustworthy witness, for, while condemning the cruelty of the Matabele, he observes and praises their pluck, giving instances such as that of the man who, with five bullets in his body and his leg broken, kept on loading and firing without a thought of surrender; and, again, at the attack on the laager, on November 1st, that of the big Matabele who came down alone on the British line, "running the gauntlet of two Maxims, a Nordenfeld, and a Gardner, and firing away as steadily as possible until he was bowled over not more than seventy yards away." Moreover, he has nothing but good words for Lobengula himself; "who," he says, "acted throughout in fine, even noble manner"—a fact sufficiently proved by his protection of the white men who were in his power, even after the annihilation of his finest regiments. Captain Donovan left Matabeleland, the war being apparently over, before the death of Wilson and his men, which was the one disaster, as it was also the crowning display of heroic courage and constancy, in the whole campaign. In conclusion, it may be noted that Captain Donovan made frequent and successful use of his Kodak, and the result is that not only the scenery of the country, but also the laagers and other features of the campaign are brought before our eyes with the most vivid realistic effect.

### THE CATHOLIC REVIVAL OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

*The Catholic Revival of the Nineteenth Century.* Six Lectures by GEORGE WORLEY. With an Introduction by the Dean of St. Paul's. London: Elliot Stock. 1894.

WE confess to having taken this book up with a certain sense of weariness. No one can deny the importance of the Tractarian movement; but the books and articles that have been written about it have grown to be somewhat of a burden. For the time being one is inclined to cry out, "We have heard enough of the thing; let it rest now for another age to busy itself over, when a sufficient time will have elapsed to let the movement be seen more in proportion." All that contemporaries, all that our own generation, can say about it worth saying has assuredly been said; there are interests better worth thinking and writing about here at the hour.

Such was our feeling as we took this little volume up and started on it. Now, as we lay it down, we are almost of a mind to vow that we will never entertain such thoughts any more; for Mr. Worley has succeeded in thoroughly interesting us from his first page to his last, and we are becomingly grateful to him. These six lectures, "delivered at Clapham during last Lent to a number of teachers and others interested in the subject," are in every way admirable. The lecturer is a layman engaged in business in the City, and evidently of pronounced Church views; but he writes not only with an intimate knowledge of the matters he is handling, and in a pleasant style that carries one on, but with a quite singularly balanced judgment and fairness of spirit. We recommend the book, therefore, to every one who is interested in the more recent development of the Anglican Communion—recommend it honestly and heartily.

To the ordinary reader the first two lectures, dealing with the conditions of the English Church previous to the rise of the Oxford Revival, and the two last, treating of this revival's literary and more general results, are likely, perhaps, to prove of greatest interest. Mr. Worley is anything in the world but a special pleader, a fanatical enthusiast. He allows frankly enough, for instance, that many of the utterances and practices of the Anglo-Catholic revival were mistaken and morbid; mediævalism ran rampant, there were affectations in manners and in devotions that we can only now read of with a smile; amidst an extensive literature there was "of course a great deal of rubbish that will go to line the inside of trunks or to wrap up small purchases of grocery"; it had gone "just a little beyond the bounds of common sense"; in architecture, art, and music, again, an exclusive Gothic fancy led to absurd doctrines and disastrous actions, and "in undoing the churchwardens' repairs and beautifications of the last century much really good Renaissance work was ruthlessly destroyed as unchristian." How true all this is beyond any shadow of a doubt! To think for the moment only of the actual structure of our churches and of their furniture and decoration. Scarcely any educated and sane man may now be found who does not reflect with rage and disgust on the mischief "Restoration" has played up and down the country with these precious buildings. How entirely the sense of continuity about them has been destroyed; and the sense, too, of charm, of veritable edification, which would have come to us from their very disorderliness, so to say—from that gathering together in one building the tokens and workmanship of successive generations of worshippers, with their varying, incongruous tastes and needs and methods! To-day these edifices are all spic-and-span, swept and garnished, restored in mock Gothic, adorned at so much a square foot by the ecclesiastical tradesmen. Let us grant that an awakened sense of reverence has been at the bottom of this change; but yet, what an unbalanced sense! Zeal, unquestionably; but zeal "not according to knowledge," what monstrosities and disaster it lands us in!

Only something, no doubt, had to be done in those old days, sixty years ago, when the Tractarians first broke in upon us. We may lament the extravagance of the revival in doctrine and manners at this or that point of its development; but a revival in some sort was urgent, was inevitable. Leaving doctrine alone, and keeping to this one consideration of our churches, the state of slovenly neglect into which so many of them had been allowed to fall, the indecent laxness which characterized men's worship and general behaviour in them, can neither be questioned nor excused. "Cases have been known," writes Mr. Worley, "where the tedium of a long service, or the appetite engendered by it, has been relieved by the entrance of a livery servant, between prayers and sermon, with sherry and light refreshments." Kneeling, of course, was not only uncouth, but for the most part it was all but physically impossible from the structure of the

seats. We can ourselves remember, at a much more recent date, how at a church, not an unfashionable one, where the old order of things yet lingered on, the paltry little Communion Table, with its dirty velvet hangings, had two holes at either end of it, used by the sextoness as store-holes for her dusters and candle-ends; while on Sacrament days, at the close of the service, the old incumbent would come out and, leaning over a neighbouring pew, chat to its occupants, while he munched the remainder of the consecrated bread he held there in the paten.

Instances of neglect, of irreverence, such as these would be found to our hand numerous as blackberries on a bush had we time to collect or space to write them down in; nor are they but gross examples of degradation in out-of-the-way corners, they are fair specimens rather of the spirit in which things were carried on at the beginning of the century throughout the Church. And that is what we have to remember when we utter our anathemas against all the pitiful vandalism which has been committed under the name of restoration, and deplore the unhealthy affectations of foreign ritual and devotion which in some quarters have done not a little to destroy the distinctive soberness and dignity of Anglican worship. That the Church in its vitality, its power, the width of its spiritual influence, has benefited unspeakably by the Tractarian movement is before our eyes daily as a plain fact; and if men at one time ran wildly off into extravagances of innovation, it was, perhaps, a consequence really inevitable of what we may be allowed to call that more disastrous extravagance of slovenly indifference, which two or three generations since prevailed unquestioned. Yes, here indeed, after all, is but one more exemplification of the law, which at times seems so unjust, but is assuredly so inexorable always, that if the fathers eat sour grapes the teeth of their children are set on edge. If our Georgian fathers had only not been so reckless of their spiritual inheritance, we of to-day should hardly be regretting as we do the irreparable loss of how much that was admirable in the fabric and furniture of those old churches.

### A CHILD OF THE AGE.

*A Child of the Age.* By FRANCIS ADAMS. London: John Lane. 1894.

FRANCIS ADAMS intended to complete a series of novels, drawing types of all the social life of the day, working through a cycle of characters, as did Balzac. *A Child of the Age* was revised with ambitious care by the author, and there is something infinitely touching in its production now—now when the fight is over, and he is laid in the quiet of the eternal fields. The impression it leaves is of the modern note of sadness, of futility. Ambitions, smaller or larger, occupy men's minds, as toys the minds of children, and give meaning to their existence—desire to acquire money, to hoard or lavish money—desire nearly always for some gratification of vanity such as philanthropy or more ephemeral joys. Art, and the passion for art, open for us a wider horizon, a more exalted view; and its votaries are touched more vividly by what beauty and variety is to be found in life. But the only two great and enduring realities after all are love and death, and it is with these verities that the little book deals passionately. It is supposed to be a candid self-revelation, the history of a boy-poet. Deeply interesting are his little early struggles; interesting his intense personality. All the restlessness of modern nerves is given in these earlier pages, with the fancies of the imaginative child, living, at that time, in the world "made by the singer for the dreamer." The superb legend of religion attracted him as it fascinates all poets, but pessimism pressed on him its chilling fingers, and he was nearly engulfed in the dark waters of despondency, deafened and maddened by the tolling of "la morne cloche de l'ennui."

The prose of Francis Adams paints visibly and palpably the outward aspect of things, and it has also the gift of suggesting for reverie abstract ideas. Not faultless, indeed, but touched with the magic of real poetry; without the elaborate carving of the chisel; devoid of preciousness or even research. The cliché and the cossene are happily absent; freshness is here and spontaneity, though there is a certain want of absolute sense of form, of exactness, of proportion. The love incident is exquisite and exquisitely told. "Rosy" lives; her emotions stir us. Wonderfully suggested in several parts of the work is the severe irony of nature before profound human suffering.

But the charm of the book is the analysis of mental torture, of interesting remorse, of the despair of one to whom the future is without light. One is grateful for the artistic revelation of the sweet wormwood of pain. Realistic it is, yet not unrelieved by the sound of the harps and flutes of ideality.

It is in one of the pages about his early boyhood, when he has

described a row on the river on a lovely spring day (the description is full of the zest of youth), that he says:—

"And yet I thought, standing up in the bow of the boat and looking across the river, I could wish I was sleeping the sleep of death, under the earth, at rest."

#### MR. DAVIDSON'S POEMS.

*Ballads and Songs.* By JOHN DAVIDSON. London: John Lane. 1894.

MR. DAVIDSON'S new book is the best thing he has done, and to say this is to say a good deal. Few among recent poets have raised such high hopes in the minds of expectant readers, and none have dashed those hopes so wantonly and so rudely to the ground. Here, at all events, is a poet who is never tame or dull; who, at all events, never leaves us indifferent: his verse speaks to the blood, and there are times when "the thing becomes a trumpet." He writes of large and manly themes; has a hearty and vivid sympathy with men and women, especially if they sin or suffer; with what is healthy and riotous; with poverty, and adventure, and London streets, and the great carnival of Nature. He has the audacity of conviction, and, in his resolve to be bold, is generally over-bold. He is sincere in having no reticences, and, by having no reticences, reaches fine effects, and spoils exquisite pictures. He has an instinctive sense of the magic of words, of the carrying force of phrases, of the possibilities of new expression by means of happy unfamiliarities; and his facility in this direction hurries him into headlong extravagances, which he is too careless or too cocksure to correct. Indeed, the secret of his great defect is that he is a poet who is also a Philistine. He clamorously refuses to admit that the poet is not only born but made, and would, we doubt not, defend his wildest caprices as coming reasonably under the prerogative of a divine right. This (if he would but realize it) is the view of the Philistine, who imagines poetry to be a happy accident, and no more. Without the happy accident there is indeed no poetry; but with no more there can be no art. Mr. Davidson is not, in any sufficient sense, an artist; nor will he ever be the poet he might be while he looks upon art as the Philistine looks upon it, as being a weak, mawkish thing; upon a fine finish as so much clever veneer, and upon the infinite patience of the artist as a mere persistence in triviality. He has splendid merits, and, in the "Ballad of a Nun," for instance, has done splendid work; and he has delicate merits, and has written intimately and exquisitely of nature, all through his pages; but he has not that sense of design, which, the poet once being born, is the prime requisite in his making. Take, for example, the long and impressive "Ballad in Blank Verse of the Making of a Poet." It is full of fine things, but with what over-emphasis is everything said, what a clashing and clanging and blazing in all these heavy and heavily coloured words! There is no restraint, no repose; the atmosphere is as hot as the atmosphere of a music-hall, full of gas and smoke and human breath; and the orchestra blares away with all its brass. The poem reminds one, as Mr. Davidson's work sometimes does, of Ebenezer Jones; it is less curiously, interestingly morbid, but it has (along with other very different qualities and merits) something of that nervous haste, that jostling rush, which we find in such poems as "A Crisis" or "Two Sufferers" in the *Studies of Sensation and Event*. Mr. Davidson, in his own words,

Wastes his passion like a prodigal  
Right royally.

But let us give a specimen of his verse, and from this poem:—

This grey town

That pipes the morning up before the lark  
With shrieking steam, and from a hundred stalks  
Laquers the sooty sky; where hammers clang  
On iron hulls, and cranes in harbours creak,  
Rattle and swing, whole cargoes on their necks;  
Where men sweat gold that others hoard or spend,  
And lurk like vermin in their narrow streets:  
This old grey town, this firth, this further strand  
Spangled with hamlets, and the wooded steeps,  
Whose rocky tops behind each other press,  
Fantastically carved like antique helms  
High-hung in heaven's cloudy armoury,  
Is world enough for me.

That gives us one side of Mr. Davidson; here, from the "Ballad of a Nun," is another:—

The adventurous sun took Heaven by storm;  
Clouds scattered largesses of rain;  
The sounding cities, rich and warm,  
Smouldered and glittered in the plain.

Sometimes it was a wandering wind,  
Sometimes the fragrance of the pine,  
Sometimes the thought how others sinned,  
That turned her sweet blood into wine.

And here, from "Thirty Bob a Week," is another:—

I step into my heart and there I meet  
A god-almighty devil singing small,  
Who would like to shout and whistle in the street,  
And squelch the passers flat against the wall;  
If the whole world were a cake he had the power to take,  
He would take it, ask for more, and eat it all.

Now Mr. Davidson has spoken for himself, and with no uncertain voice. He has unique gifts, and the prospect of leaving a singularly brilliant future—behind him. If he had more respect for art, and less reliance on accident, he might do great things. Whether he will or not depends on a most uncertain quantity; himself.

#### FRENCH LITERATURE.

*Le Jardin d'Épicure.* Par Anatole France. Paris: Calmann Lévy.

*Le Chemin de Paradis.* Par Charles Maurras. Paris: Calmann Lévy.

*Ernest Renan: Essai de biographie psychologique.* Par Gabriel Séailles. Paris: Perrin et Cie.

*Phèdre: ou la Courtisane de Smyrne.* Par Meusnier de Querlon ("Les Conteurs du XVIII<sup>e</sup> Siècle.") Paris: E. Flammarion.

M. ANATOLE FRANCE'S new book is a Book of Hours, a commonplace book if you will, in which a calm, meditative spectator of things has recorded a certain number of impressions, sensations, and ideas, not because they are profound discoveries, or contain startling epigrams, but because they have come to him in just such a manner, and with no further aim, than to announce: "La vérité est que la vie est délicieuse, horrible, charmante, affreuse, douce, amère, et qu'elle est tout." The whole book has the gentle, philosophic charm which disengages itself from a languid pessimism, a delicate, priestly urbanity, to which a touch of something agreeably Pagan comes to distinguish the individuality of the writer from that of his chief master, Renan. He has a charming and melancholy contentment with things as they are, a philosophic resignation:—"Je ne sais si ce monde est le pire des mondes possibles. . . . Je sens que nous sommes dans une fantasmagorie et que notre vue de l'univers est purement l'effet du cauchemar de ce mauvais sommeil qui est la vie." But what of that? "Ma faiblesse m'est chère. Je tiens à mon imperfection comme à ma raison d'être." And so thought follows thought, speculation glides into speculation, blandly, with a gracious ingenuity; there are pages of learned pleasantries, gravely amusing; with a sensitive subtlety evident in the mere sound and texture of the prose. M. France writes with a careful slowness, a slightly dandified care, producing, certainly, results which are often exquisite. Here is a typical example, alike of the style and sentiment of the book:—

"L'Ironie et la Pitié sont deux bonnes conseillères; l'une en souriant, nous rend la vie aimable; l'autre, qui pleure, nous la rend sacrée. L'Ironie que j'invoque n'est point cruelle. Elle ne raille ni l'amour, ni la beauté. Elle est douce et bienveillante. Son rire calme la colère, et c'est elle qui nous enseigne à nous moquer des méchants et des sots, que nous pouvions, sans elle, avoir la faiblesse de hair."

How charmingly, how leisurely, that is said, with just the careful and packed simplicity of phrase which M. France defines as the reasonable aim of modern prose. "J'ai voulu donner à entendre," he tells us, "que, dans le langage, la simplicité belle et désirable n'est qu'une apparence et qu'elle résulte uniquement du bon ordre et de l'économie souveraine des parties du discours." In defining his ideal, he has described also his practice and his achievement in the matter of style. Whatever he is or is not, he has the scrupulous elegance of the scholar, the habit of matching word with thought, and of measuring and sifting both. He holds himself somewhat daintily apart, seeming to look out on life, pensively, smilingly, from a slightly coquettish library full of Greek and Latin authors charmingly bound, and with a beautiful cat, probably, curled up on a cushion. Thais and Socrates are nearer to him, more apparent to his real consciousness, than that "monôme d'étudiants qui déroulait sa queue dans le jardin du Luxembourg." But, all the same, it amuses him to watch the *monôme*, just as it amused him one day to celebrate the name of M. Jean Moréas with that "benevolent" irony of which he approves so highly. And he has disciples even in the Latin Quarter.

There is M. Maurras, for instance. *Le Chemin de Paradis* contains some introductory verses by M. Anatole France, and the

whole book owes much to the writer whom M. Maurras calls his "dear master." M. Maurras is a young man who prides himself on forming part of the rather absurd *école romane* which M. Jean Moréas prides himself on having invented. He takes himself and his theories very seriously indeed, and assures us : "Neuf fois dans ces récits égalant le nombre des Muses je me suis appliquée à donner un visage, un corps humain et une démarche vivante à des opinions assez peu courues de nos jours." But, in spite of this pretentious gravity, M. Maurras has a certain talent, graceful, delicate, refined; and, in at least one of his studies, "Les Deux Testaments de Simplice," he has handled a subtle case of conscience, or of sentiment, with something of real subtlety.

M. Séailles's "psychological biography" of Renan is an extremely careful and elaborate piece of work, sympathetic and yet impartial; learned, subtle, and eloquent; a scrupulous examination and appraisement of every side of the life and work of a man whose life and work were alike typical of the age in which he lived, and expressive of an individuality which was full of exceptions to every rule. "De tous les spectacles, dont 'le grand chorège' fait les frais pour la distraction des dilettantes, la vie de Renan," says the writer truly, "n'est pas le moins curieux, ni le moins amusant." And the book in which this life is told, commented upon, examined with acute and detailed analysis, is curious, too, as a document in psychology, amusing even, in the general French sense of the word, by its way of handling the whole difficult subject. It is the work of a man of science, who is also a man of letters, above all a philosopher, and a French philosopher.

M. Flammarion is to be congratulated on the excellent idea of his new collection of "Conteurs du XVIII<sup>e</sup> Siècle," on the excellent choice of his first volume, and on the pretty form of the book itself. Meusnier de Querlon is a forgotten writer who is better worth remembering than many more solid and reputable names. He was a man of learning, who, with that delicate tact which belonged specially to the last century in France, knew how to entice scholarship into the service of a charming frivolity. His *Prophétion, ou la Courtisane de Smyrne*, the original edition of which bears the imprint of London, 1748, is, for all its eighteenth-century mask of an elegant and scented classicism, a close and genuine document of the manners and sentiments of the age, that age in which "toute heure est celle du berger." It is human, touching, interesting, full of a fine analytic ingenuity, the dialectic of a schoolman in the subtle cases of those "fautes si excusables, des faiblesses si autorisées par les circonstances où se trouve une femme"; with how well-bred a restraint, yet with what a science of the fine shades of sophisticating sentiment, what a sympathetic eloquence, at times, in its half-mocking, half-serious, apology for the far from dangerous *liaisons* of a society which one figures always at that moment (to quote our author) "quand les lustres et les flambeaux viennent répandre un fard innocent sur les visages, et, par un clair-obscur inimitable, donner aux traits cet adoucissement ou ce relief qui échappe au pinceau."

#### NOVELS.

*Thou Art the Man.* By the Author of "Lady Audley's Secret," "Vixen," "Ishmael," &c. 3 vols. London: Simpkin, Marshall, Kent, & Co., Lim.

THE reader acquainted with Miss Braddon's previous works who guesses, after a perusal of the first chapter of *Thou Art the Man*, that "Sibyl, Countess of Penrith," has contracted a bigamous marriage may be excused, but he will be wrong, although it will be some time before he is allowed to discover it. Not because the purpose of the author requires any concealment of the real state of things. None is attempted; but the introduction to Lady Penrith once effected and a mysterious occurrence recorded, we are taken back to the early love affairs of her mother and herself, and the family history is related with much detail. In fact, we are at once brought face to face with an error in construction almost incredible in a writer of Miss Braddon's experience, as the opening incident belongs of right to the latter half of the second volume. The novel is by way of illustrating a trite doctrine of heredity, though there is no novelty in the transmission of epilepsy. It forms an excuse for the kind of crime without which the author would, indeed, be a changeling. It is not disease alone which is hereditary here, for we find that Sibyl, Countess, &c. inherits from her mother a tendency to hopeless affection. The elder lady has fallen in love with a man married to an epileptic lunatic, "instead of which" she has married a millionaire mineowner, risen from the pit's mouth. Her daughter bestows her heart upon the epileptic lunatic's son, and he puts an end to a pretty love affair by getting himself

suspected on very substantial grounds of murdering an illegitimate step-sister of his sweetheart's, whom the father with exquisite taste has smuggled into his household. It is not pretended that the father had felt so much as a passing affection for the mother. Brandon Mountford is by no means certain whether he has murdered the girl or not in a fit; so Sibyl, aided by the villain of the piece, who is of course the real murderer, assists him to escape, and after ten years he turns up, to make himself very inconvenient, and dies. When Miss Braddon has once tasted blood she must go on, and another murder is committed, quite useless so far as the purpose of the novel is concerned, since Lord Penrith, one of the most colourless peers we have seen in fiction, might very well have left Sibyl a widow in a less sensational way. She marries a sketchy parson. She is incomparably the best drawn character in the book, and the change in her disposition, on the misfortune to her lover, is well indicated. The most tiresome part of the work, and an entirely unnecessary one, is that tritest of dodges, the "diary" of Coralie Urquhart. One part of this is meant for her father's use, and gives him, with much circumstance, portions of her autobiography with which he must have been already perfectly familiar, and which are altogether foreign to the purpose of the diary. Coralie is an odd mixture of qualities, some of which it is suggested are inherited. She cannot understand the early rising of devout women, "when they might enjoy the best hour of the day, the hour between waking and getting up, with a cup of strong tea and a volume of Guy de Maupassant's stories." Her speculations on the probable death of her father will take a good deal of beating for cold-blooded calculation, yet the author is clearly bidding for the reader's sympathy. Altogether, Miss Braddon's new manner is not strikingly successful. Her old love of sensation remains, and her attempt at an analytical method is wanting in strength, consistency, and insight.

*The Star of Fortune: a Story of the Indian Mutiny.* By J. E. MUDDOCK, F.R.G.S. 2 vols. London: Chapman & Hall. 1894.

This is an account of a sufficiently thrilling incident of the Mutiny, told in a style with which we are pretty familiar, and presenting few features not common to all stories of that exciting time. There is even a hint of the lady who thinks she hears the hoofs of rescuing cavalry, not so much "through rolling drums" as long before the sound comes within earshot. Mr. Muddock's imagination and memory have alike been stimulated by the fact that he was stationed in India during the Mutiny. Many of the incidents in this work are drawn from actual observation, and these are given with considerable force and vividness. The author has, however, interwoven the Indian episodes with a somewhat futile love story, beginning in Edinburgh, and has peremptorily moved the venue to the East. The ending is unsatisfactory, inasmuch as the heroine's affections have clearly shifted from the first hero, through no fault of his, to the second—a tremendous fellow who does wonders against the Sepoys. It becomes necessary, therefore, to kill No. 1. No. 2, Captain Sandon, during the Mutiny, reminds us, in his fighting moments, of the piratical hero of our boyhood, with "a pistol in each hand and a sword in the other." In more peaceful times his attitude was less aggressive; for, although it was known that he was always armed with a revolver, we are told that he carried it concealed, somewhat, we should think, to the regret of the author. We may be allowed to suggest, however, that, in 1857, the smoking of a "choice cigar" in the presence of a lady would not have been tolerated, and that even in these days of decayed courtesy some chivalrous lovers would shrink from such a breach of manners when making a declaration of their passion. Natural and appropriate dialogue is not Mr. Muddock's strong point. "There is something wrong, for you have the tell-tale expression that so clearly denotes the state of your mind," strikes us as rather stilted from a daughter to her father, not otherwise to qualify the sentence. Self-repression is an admirable virtue on occasion, but we wish that Lieutenant Hallett, Lover Number One, could have found something more forcible to say than "I must take exception, sir, to both those terms," even though it was said proudly, when the father of his lady-love called him coward and blackguard. We are scarcely surprised that, on an equally tame protest against a similar insult, the old man should strike him. Hallett's long speech in answer to the blow is a marvel of feeble priggishness, but it is nothing by the side of the vainglorious bombast in his letter to his sweetheart, and his address to his Colonel when asking to exchange. In these passages the depths of conversational ineptitude have been reached. We would also point out that "wanton" is an over-strong term for a father to apply to his daughter unless he means to impugn her virtue; and that for a lady, on discovering a gentleman kissing another lady's finger

tips, to speak of finding them in *flagrante delicto*, is likely to lead to misunderstanding of an unpleasant nature.

*Red and White Heather.* North Country Tales and Ballads. By ROBERT BUCHANAN. London: Chatto & Windus. 1894.

The ballads come first for mention, and the last of them first of all, for there we learn of Mr. Buchanan's undying love for his godmother. Why godmother? Why not mother, or grandmother, since Caledonia is the lady in question, and since

Blood of thy veins runs on in mine,  
Flesh of thy flesh am I.

If the author's affection is to be measured by the badness of his verse he is a fond godson indeed, although he did forget her for a time. Here we are told that Mr. Buchanan was once a "savage bairn"—to rhyme with stern—although we should scarcely have thought it, judging by the suavity of his methods with his critics; but he was also a little contradictory:—

And fierce and wild my nature grew,  
Yet kindly, like thine own.

That, however, does not seem to have mattered much on account of the "glamourie" which "slid into my soul." "L'Envoi" is an absurdity which might be pardonable did it bear the mark of any deep sincerity, or convey any very clear meaning in connexion with the personality of the author; but the rhyming of "bairn" and "stern" twice in the same poem is too much. The longest of the tales, "Miss Jean's Love Story," Mr. Buchanan tells us, was written many years ago. We can well believe it, and, if we might add a suggestion, we would say that it was probably also written very shortly after the author had taken a course of Arthur Dimmesdale and *The Scarlet Letter*. The scowling parson with "black blood" (varied by a "black devil") which the lady of his tempestuous love might have "calmed down" or "quelled," is the merest mechanical parody of Hawthorne's gloomy hero. Of the equal tragedy of "A Highland Princess," now appearing for the first time, nothing calls for notice except that the satire against certain Scottish characteristics is trite and commonplace, not to say unpatriotic, and that Mr. Buchanan has taken an opportunity, such as he rarely neglects, of introducing some withering sarcasms against literary critics. That this story is by way of being à clef does not concern us any more than it does in the infinitely silly "Sandie Macpherson," in which a thinly disguised Carlyle is represented as having failed to command the respect of a doltish schoolfellow who becomes a small tradesman, and upon whom much feeble jocularity is wasted. "The Legend of the Mysterious Piper" might have been a temperance story for children thirty years ago. They would not stand it now.

*Aaron the Jew.* By B. L. FARJEON. 3 vols. London: Hutchinson & Co. 1894.

To Mr. Zangwill must be ascribed at once the credit and the blame of the recent prevalence of the Jew in fiction. From Isaac of York to Fagin and Daniel Deronda the Hebrew has offered a fair mark for the pen of the novelist, but it cannot be said that Mr. Farjeon has tackled him with any degree of success. Following the fashion of the hour, the author has adopted a process of whitewashing, but with so little moderation or judgment that, instead of attracting our sympathy or compelling our good will, he inspires us with a feeling of absolute dislike for his tiresome and namby-pamby hero, Aaron Cohen. There never was such a Jew, and we sincerely hope we shall never meet such a Christian. Not that he is a bad man; on the contrary, he is much too good, and his one fault, on which the story is based, is the least intolerable fact about him. His wife and child are at the point of death, and he is penniless, when, through the agency of another much too benevolent Jew, Mr. Moss, the love-child of a mysterious frail lady is entrusted to his care, together with money and a fateful iron casket. It is not from greed, but because the knowledge of the loss of her own child would surely bring about Rachel Cohen's death, that Aaron represents the waif as dead, and adopts her as his own. Such a story affords the amplest opportunity for study and portrayal of Jewish character and custom, but Aaron is a Jew in name only, and Mr. Farjeon has sought to produce his effects solely by the use of the various "properties" of the writer of Jewish stories and frequent recourse to long extracts from some Jewish manual of devotion. In fact, the Judaism is external only, and but for this frippery the characters might as well be Quakers or Mohammedans. The meekness, gentle forbearance, the lavish generosity and practical Socialism of this almost impeccable person are laid on so thick and slab, that he becomes an absolute nuisance. After the record of the fault, to which is allotted quite as full a prelude as it deserves, the story is simply a detailed panegyric

of the Jew's virtues up to the time when a little difficulty arrives in the affection of the supposed Jewish maiden for the son of a peer. About this time it seems to have occurred to the author that it was necessary to finish up the book and reveal the girl's parentage, which is done in a particularly commonplace manner. Mr. Farjeon is an experienced story-teller, and should have been able to present his materials with greater force and variety than he has done here, to say nothing of his want of insight into the class of character which he affects to reproduce. The flash of villainy which momentarily illuminates the book is only just sufficient to render the dull virtues of the principal personages more oppressive; for a Dr. Spenlove, Mr. Moss, with his irritating trick of singing little scraps of Italian opera, fully quoted in the vernacular, a self-denying servant, and Rachel herself, all vie with Aaron in a state of beatific priggishness. In the desire to exalt the Jewish race above all mankind, a list, rather catholic than discriminating, is given of great Jews, and is so far modern as to include the name of Baron Hirsch. If the style is dull, and especially so where it is intended to be humorous, it is commendably free from slovenliness. So much we have a right to expect from so practised a hand; but we can hardly believe that Mr. Farjeon meant to introduce a jarring note into the placidity of a sort of Young Men and Women's Jewish Association Meeting, such as is implied in his declaration that "Her raisin wine was perfect, and Aaron smacked his lips as well as the children; the finest vintage of champagne would not have been so palatable to him." A little waggonery of this kind would have done something to relieve the dreary monotony of an exceptionally tedious piece of padding.

*Phil Hathaway's Failures.* By GEORGE HALSE, Author of "Weeping Ferry" &c. 3 vols. London: Henry & Co. 1894.

If Aaron Cohen, the Jew, is a prig and a bore, what are we to call Phil Hathaway, incomparable wit, exquisite caricaturist, model amateur gardener, and ineffable minister of the Gospel? But for the announcement on the title-page, we should have taken for granted that this was Mr. Halse's first work, and treated it with indulgence accordingly, so overwhelming are the evidences of inexperience and ineptitude. Our wonder that it should extend to three volumes is only approached by our amazement that it should ever have been published at all. The hero, about whom the feeble story is woven, is a conceited and morbidly self-conscious young mediocrity, about whose genius and modesty we are asked to believe impossible things. We first find him in the society of a peculiarly obnoxious young medical man whose humour leads him to swear by "Moly Hoses," and (the stock oath in the book) "Magnus Apollo." The editor of the *Esoteric Magazine* finds him dashing off brilliant caricatures in a restaurant, and follows him (or rather his medical friend) home, and says of him that "He's humorous as Phiz himself, incisive as Hogarth, and so original that I feel pretty sure he would be quite up to supplying the text to his designs." On the strength of this impression, this very eccentric editor goes off to the Athenaeum and "entering the library of the Club, he referred to a directory of distinguished artists and littérateurs, but the name Albright did not figure there," and afterwards writes (to the wrong man), "My dear Sir, I elect without hesitation and without reading the papers in favour of 'Elbows.' Take your time about it," and so on. Hathaway meets a young lady artist at the British Museum, maunders about Art to her without an introduction, borrows a lock of her hair, and gives her a picture in exchange, which her angry mother returns to him with a letter which drives him into the country, and through a course of agriculture into the Church, from which he had previously retired. Before the end comes, with the inevitable marriage to the golden-haired young person, he pours out page after page of dismal self-condemnation, all apparently used as a bait for compliment, and his success in this endeavour speaks better for his knowledge of the weaknesses of his friends than for their intelligence. The dialogue is written throughout in a style calculated to gladden the corporate heart of a Young Men's Mutual Improvement (not to say Mutual Admiration) Society, and the author apparently has at his command an inexhaustible supply of pretentious platitudes. For extra characters we have a comic landlady, a serio-comic servant with a sympathetic interest, a virtuous poacher converted by the hero and a dying schoolmistress, and a herd of low-comedy villagers drawn on well-known lines. The stilted affectation of the author's language and that of his creations is the worst, or at least the most irritating, fault of the book. For instance, Jessie Dearmer is not too ill to teach the children; she is "too unwell to go through her daily function with the infant population"; wedding favours are not made, they are "fabricated by the attendant servants." In short, the talk of these ex-

tremely uninteresting people is as inflated as it is silly, though in the matter of mixed metaphor there is nothing to equal the statement that "With the sharp but merciful scalpel of truth he has administered a comforting balm." And this, in spite of Mr. Halse's evident smattering of medical terminology. One short specimen of dialogue will suffice to give an impression of its general inanity. It is the opening conversation at the British Museum between Hathaway and his uninterested lady-love:—

"This beautiful fragment seems to have a great charm for you, Madam, as, in fact, it has for me."

"Yes; the more one studies it, the more one is impressed with it," replied the young lady frankly, recognizing in Hathaway's speech and manner a reliable gentleman.

"But it takes a cultivated eye to fully appreciate a mutilated statue," suggested Hathaway.

"That very defect perhaps adds to its fascination, as it leaves something for the imagination to supply," argued the lady with intelligence.

"Your remark proves you to be a thoughtful and not a superficial student, if I may venture to say so."

And so on, the lady a page further on "unintentionally joining in conversation with the stranger whose demeanour inspired confidence."

#### NEW BOOKS AND REPRINTS.

*Ruysbroeck and the Mystics.* By MAURICE MAETERLINCK. Translated by JANE T. STODDART. London: Hodder & Stoughton. 1894.

FOR the pleasure of a few Platonists M. Maeterlinck was induced to render into French "The Adornment of the Spiritual Marriage" of the Admirable Ruysbroeck, published in Brussels, 1891, as *L'Ornement des Noces Spirituelles*, with an introductory essay on Ruysbroeck and his writings. It is this essay, so delicately sympathetic, so finely apprehensive of the volatile qualities of Ruysbroeck's mysticism, which Miss Stoddart has done into English, adding certain extracts from the "Spiritual Marriage." That M. Maeterlinck should attempt to warn off the profane and the curious idle from "the threshold of this temple without architecture," though proper enough in the circumstances, and indeed a positive duty in one who is himself of the brotherhood of mystics, may prove altogether vain, so full of incitement is his delightful essay. Some may hear the word gladly who have nothing of the spirit in them. They may set forth, possibly, but they will not, M. Maeterlinck thinks, proceed far on the journey into the blue distance, where they will find, by the way, no such light and atmosphere as Tieck provides. The Hermit of Grönental lived his contemplative life, poor and alone, in the forest of Soignes. He had no skill in dialectic, like the illustrious Plotinus. He knew no Greek, and probably no Latin. In literary craft he had no mastery. His style is *gauche* and involved; his method without logic and unordered. Therefore, M. Maeterlinck declares that he writes of Ruysbroeck for a few Platonists only. But he is assured that upon this poor and ignorant mystic of the Green Valley was cast the mantle of Plotinus. He obeyed the divine injunction *Nosce te ipsum*, and rich was his inheritance. Where Plotinus begins his journey, at the parting of the ways when fear fell upon Plato and he paused and knelt down, Ruysbroeck arose, and in him was the true succession. The continuity, as M. Maeterlinck truly remarks, was one of language and inspiration rather than of thought. He notes the kinship of the Flemish mystic with Plotinus and the Alexandrian Platonists, on the one hand, and with spirits as various as Boehme and St. Teresa of Avila, on the other hand. But there is a strange difference, he justly observes, between the organic nature of Ruysbroeck's thought and theirs. There is something almost appalling in the writer's self-centred and profound abstraction. You hear no faintest murmur of the warring world in which he wrote, when battles extended, as M. Maeterlinck says, "into the very forests where saints were kneeling." His works are not too far off from us, probably are in the very centre of our humanity, as his translator puts it, but it is we who are too far from him. If there is something of imperfect relation between the mystic's thought and his language, something of a struggle with the unspeakable, suggestive of the conflict between Jacob and the Angel—to use M. Maeterlinck's fine simile—there is light for the discerning spiritual in Ruysbroeck. "He has made us look into the distance—and that is much."

*The Coming of Cuculain.* By STANDISH O'GRADY. Illustrated by D. Murray Smith. London: Methuen & Co. 1894.

In this romance of the heroic age of Ireland Mr. O'Grady tells the story of the boyhood and youth of Cuculain, the son of

Sualtam—*fortissimus heros Scotorum*, as he is called in the chronicle of Tighernach, Abbot of Clonmacnoise. His aim is to give a general idea of the cycle of Irish literature that celebrates the Red Branch Knights of Ulster. He would set before "swift modern readers" the more striking aspects of the primitive and heroic age of which that literature treats. This project has been skilfully executed. The vast material at his hand has been subjected by Mr. O'Grady to a process of selection and concentration which has resulted in a romance that is extremely fascinating and admirably well knit. Especially do we commend the method of narrative, which retains in so slight measure that "large utterance"—simple, vivid, direct—that the theme demands.

*The Russian Jews.* By LEO ERRERA. With a Prefatory Note by THEODORE MOMMSEN. Translated from the French by BELLA LÖWY. London: David Nutt. 1894.

"Extermination or Emancipation?"—such is the question inscribed on Professor Errera's title-page, and with the same alternative he concludes his suggestive history of the persecution and sufferings of the Jews in Russia within the Pale prescribed for them. There is no other remedy. Extermination, despite the barbarous treatment of the Russian Jews, will find few advocates, M. Errera remarks, even among the most virulent anti-Semitic Russians. Conversion *en masse* is not less an impossible remedy. As M. Novicow says, the temptations held forth by the authorities succeed only with the few and the baser sort of Jews; thus the Russian Government "casts the refuse of the synagogue into the bosom of the Orthodox Church." Professor Mommsen, who pays a deserved tribute to the heartrending picture the author gives of the horrible condition of the Russian Jews, inquires in the name of common sense and humanity who is there who will be found capable of removing the "disgraceful plague-spot" and darkest blot on the civilization of our times. M. Errera's volume, painful though it be to read, is supported by sound authorities, scrupulously cited throughout. Much of the more striking evidence of tyranny is extracted from the *Report of the United States Commissioners of Immigration*, Messrs. Weber and Kempster, which is, we think, much less known in England than it should be. No fuller or more exact account of the present condition of the Jews in Russia, and of the "May Laws" and other enactments of persecution, than are contained in M. Errera's book are accessible to the general public.

*Nuggets in the Devil's Punchbowl.* By ANDREW ROBERTSON. London: Longmans & Co.; Melbourne: Melville, Mullen, & Slade. 1894.

The best of Mr. Robertson's Australian stories is that which gives the collection its title. It tells of a certain sheep-shearer who is induced through a dream to give up his calling and take to gold-digging. He had been vanquished in a shearing competition, and fallen asleep from fatigue and mortification. "Boys," he said, on awaking, "I have had a dream! I'll never shear another sheep!" It was a strange dream, and stranger still was its perfect fulfilment. He took a bee-line to the "Devil's Punchbowl" and looked for the dead man of his dream. He found him, and his tent, and a photograph of girl, and certain cryptic characters sketched on the canvas of the tent, which serve in the end to guide him to the concealed shaft of a mine. He picked the gold out of that shaft, just as you might pick plums from a pudding. In brief space he took 77 lbs. of gold to the Melbourne bank. Then he discovered the original of the photograph, the daughter of the dead man, offered her the gold, and married her. He was a lucky dreamer, yet knew how to work, as few dreamers do. The story is a capital one of its kind. Nor are "Lanky Tim" and "Lost in the Bush" anything but good. The detective story, however, called "Thunder and Lightning" is far from plausible. A detective who sets out to arrest a notorious bushranger in the streets of Melbourne, and disguises himself with a beard which the wind nearly carries away as he leaves his house, is of the kind never to be met with outside fiction.

*Colour-Sergeant No. 1 Company.* By MRS. LEITH-ADAMS. 2 vols. London: Jarrold & Sons. 1894.

In this story Mrs. Leith-Adams deals with materials which she has before now treated with distinguished success. Her Irish peasants and military characters, both officers and privates, are drawn direct from nature by a keen-eyed and sympathetic observer. Drummer Coghlan and the regimental doctor, Ensign Green and "Blizzard," Lieutenant Verrinder and "Gentleman Jack" the Colour-Sergeant, the hero in disguise, are portrayed with excellent and unexaggerated truth. The scenes of barrack-life in Ireland during the Fenian scare are as good as any

described in the author's delightful story, *A Garrison Romance*, and it would be difficult to conceive anything of the kind that is better. The beauty of the pathetic element in the story, as shown in the death of Patsey and the love of Alison Drew, is not less incontestable than the brightness and humour of the lighter sketches of character and incident.

*Renshaw Fanning's Quest.* By BERTHARD MITFORD. London: Chatto & Windus. 1894.

This romance of the "Veldt" is by no means equal in conception or power to some other of Mr. Mitford's stories of South Africa, such as "Twixt Snow and Fire" and "The King's Assegai," which we have found to be among the most stirring and absorbing stories of their class. Mr. Mitford's resources as a story-teller are most fruitful, we think, when employed in what may be called the native interest. Now, there is scarcely any part played by the Zulus, or Matabili, or Kaffirs in *Renshaw Fanning's Quest*. Fanning possesses the secret of a mysterious valley of diamonds, lighted at night by one mighty brilliant, set high in some cleft, and known as "the Devil's eye." Having failed in four attempts, he sets out with a friend, and finds the wondrous diamond with others only less valuable. His perfidious comrade leaves him disabled in the wilderness, and carries off the spoil. The search for the "great eye" is a rousing episode, but, for the rest, the story is compact of melodrama, and somewhat ordinary melodrama.

*By Order of the Sun to Chile.* By J. J. AUBERTIN. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner, & Co., Lim. 1894.

Mr. Aubertin went to Chile to see the total eclipse of the sun, April 16, 1893, and he tells us how he journeyed and what he saw. Such, in plain terms, is the purport of this volume. But it is a cold way of putting it. To adopt Mr. Aubertin's florid style, we should say that he went "by order of the Sun to see his Total Eclipse." Firstly, he had a dream, and addressed certain interrogatories to the sun, most of which were obligingly responded to. Finally the sun said, "Go and see"; and Mr. Aubertin went and saw, not as an astronomer, but as a layman. With Professor Schaeberle and others he enjoyed a magnificent spectacle, of which he gives a striking and unconventional account. We trust, by the way, that, since science disavows, as Mr. Aubertin puts it, the Shakspearian fancy "the floor of heaven," he is ready to disavow the hideous misquotation from the *Merchant of Venice* (p. 44):—

Look how the floor of heaven  
Is thick enlaid with patterns of bright gold.

This is a printer's reading, no doubt, yet Mr. Aubertin's printers repeat the "patterns" on the succeeding page.

The ingenuous confessions of "J. H." in his *Diversions of an Autograph Hunter* (Elliot Stock), will move various emotions in readers, according to the individual view that may be held of the pursuit of autographs. A collector may enviously regard "J. H.'s" pertinacity and success. Those who agree with the facetious gentleman in Albert Smith's novel who made, and sold, autographs, spelling Shakspeare a dozen different ways, to suit his customers, may be merely amused by the author's enthusiasm. "J. H." met with some rebuffs, some may be glad to know, though they are as nothing compared with his triumphs. One of the most serious was from Lord Rosebery, whose secretary sent the characteristic intimation that the Prime Minister's rule is "not to intrude his handwriting on collectors of autographs." "J. H." has since "bagged," as he elegantly expresses it, that precious signature.

We have also received *Forest Birds: their Haunts and Habits*, by Harry F. Witherby (Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner, & Co.), a series of well-observed studies of bird life, with capital illustrations after photographs of mounted specimens; *An Introduction to Commercial Spanish*, by Leon Delbos (Macmillan & Co.), which should prove useful also as a grammar for beginners in the language; *Modern Journalism*, by J. B. Mackie (Crosby Lockwood & Son); *Swimming*, by Archibald Sinclair (Routledge & Sons), one of the excellent "Oval" series, and a useful handbook of the art; *Dialect Notes*, Part VI. (Boston: Cushing), issued by the American Dialect Society; *Overheard in Arcady*, by Robert Bridges (Dent & Co.); *The Palace of Ideas*, by Louise Alice Riley (Hogg); *Troublesome Cousins*, by Penelope Leslie (National Society); *Drifted Home*, by J. Harloch Potter, A.M. ("Church Monthly"); *A Tale told by Two*, by L. E. Tiddeman (Hogg); *A King of Dreams and Shadows*, by Salik (Fisher Unwin); *Tracts*

for the *Times*, No. 2; *Musicians and their Compositions*, by J. R. Griffiths (Partridge & Co.); *The Haunted House of Ben's Hollow*, by A. M. Stein (Elliott & Co.); and *Bow Bells Almanack for 1895* (Dicks).

#### LITERARY NOTES.

AMONG Mr. Murray's forthcoming publications will be a *Life and Correspondence of Sir Bartle Frere*, in two volumes, derived from hitherto unpublished documents. The author, Mr. John Martineau, looks upon Sir Bartle Frere as one of the greatest statesmen of the century. Another *apologia* will be the Rev. C. H. Simpkinson's *Life and Times of William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury*, which is written with a view to counteract the current view of Laud's character, due, no doubt, mainly to Macaulay and Hallam.

Messrs. Longmans have in the press *The Life and Times of Cardinal Wiseman*, by Mr. Wilfrid Ward, author of *W. G. Ward and the Catholic Revival*. They announce for early in January a new book by Mr. A. J. Balfour, entitled *The Foundations of Belief: being Notes introductory to the Study of Theology*. *A Life of Sir Andrew Clarke* is in preparation by the Rev. Malcolm MacColl and Dr. W. H. Allchin. There will be an introduction by Mr. Gladstone.

Mr. Fisher Unwin will shortly publish a translation, by the author himself, of M. Jusserand's *Literary History of the English People: The Origins to the Renaissance*. The volume is divided into three sections, "The Origins," "The French Invasion," and "England to the English." M. Jusserand is one of the most learned and scholarly French critics of English literature, and his studies of *The English Novel in the Time of Shakespeare* and *Piers the Plowman* (as well as that entertaining book, *La Vie Nomade et les Routes d'Angleterre au XIV<sup>e</sup> Siècle*) have already been translated into English.

Mr. Unwin is also about to issue, in December or January, simultaneously with Messrs. Scribner in America, a new book by that enterprising traveller and journalist Mr. Henry Norman, entitled *Peoples and Problems of the Far East*. Mr. Norman deals with the British, French, Russian, Spanish, and Portuguese colonies in the Far East, and with all the actualities of the moment in China, Japan, Corea, Siam, and the Malay peninsula. Mr. Norman has little sympathy with the Chinese, and much interesting information about them.

Mr. Elkin Mathews is about to publish a volume of poems by Mr. Selwyn Image. It will be called *Poems and Carols*, and will appear in the "Diversi Colores" series, which Mr. Herbert P. Horne is editing. The issue of Mr. Lionel Johnson's *Poems* in the same series is deferred till the beginning of the year. A new edition of Mr. Frederick Wedmore's graceful book of stories called *Renunciations* will shortly be published, with a frontispiece portrait of the author by Mr. J. J. Shannon.

Mr. Alfred H. Miles asks us to mention that the volume of *Humour, Society, Parody, and Occasional Verse*, which we noticed in our last issue, will be followed by a volume of Sacred Poetry, which will conclude the series of "Poets and Poetry of the Century."

Messrs. Marcus Ward & Co. announce the early publication, in two volumes, of a second selection of engraved portraits from the Anderson Rose collection. It will contain over a hundred portraits, accompanied by biographical notices. There will also be a portrait and memoir of Mr. Rose.

Two new magazines are about to appear. *The Windsor Magazine*, published by Messrs. Ward, Lock, & Bowden, will begin next month. It will have two serials, by Mr. H. S. Merriman and Mr. Guy Boothby, a poem every month by Mr. Norman Gale, and a series of "Detective Papers" by Mr. Arthur Morrison. The other magazine is to be called *The Minster*, to be published by Messrs. A. D. Innes & Co., and to begin with the new year. It is a Church magazine intended to take the place of the *Newbery House Magazine*, which is to be withdrawn; and that it is meant to combine seriousness with entertainment may be inferred from the list of contributors to the first number, where we see the Archbishop of Canterbury side by side with Mr. Corney Grain, Mr. James Payn in company with the Dean of St. Paul's, and the almost inevitable Sir Edwin Arnold, doubtless prepared to combine both qualities in his verse.

The December number of the *National Review* will contain an important article by Lord Salisbury, on the position of the House of Lords. The December *Blackwood* will contain some "Reminiscences of James Anthony Froude," by Mr. Skelton, including a large selection from Mr. Froude's letters.

The translation of *Fromont jeune et Risler aîné*, which Mr. Ernest Vizetelly has done for Messrs. Hutchinson & Co., comes

[November 24, 1894.]

very appropriately at a moment when M. Alphonse Daudet announces his intention of visiting England, after the manner of M. Zola; a visit destined, we trust, to meet with a no less triumphant and amusing success.

It is pleasant to learn that Mrs. Hodgson Burnett has a new book of short stories in the press, which will be published shortly by Messrs. F. Warne & Co. One of the four stories is a sort of prologue to *Little Lord Fauntleroy*, giving us the earlier life of that popular and engaging child.

Messrs. G. P. Putnam's Sons will publish next week a new volume of the "Heroes of the Nations" series, *Abraham Lincoln and the Downfall of American Slavery*, by Noah Brooks; and a new novel, *Miss Hurd: an Enigma*, by Miss A. K. Green, author of *The Leavenworth Case*—but, for a change, this is not to be a detective story.

Messrs. A. Constable & Co. are about to publish a book on *The Travels of the Cesarewitch in the East*, containing about five hundred wood engravings and photogravures from sketches made by a special artist who accompanied the expedition. The first volume will be ready in January.

Messrs. Stevens & Sons are issuing an elaborate work on *The Merchant Shipping Act, 1894*, by Mr. Robert Temperley, M.A., Barrister-at-Law, of the Inner Temple. The volume contains text, marginal references, copious notes, an appendix, and a full index.

*We purpose publishing in our impression of the 1st of December a Literary Supplement, which will be chiefly devoted to Christmas Books.*

*We beg leave to state that we cannot undertake to return rejected Communications. The Editor must also entirely decline to enter into correspondence with the writers of MSS. sent in and not acknowledged.*

ADVERTISEMENTS intended for the SATURDAY REVIEW should be addressed to the OFFICE, 38 SOUTHAMPTON STREET, STRAND, LONDON, or to Messrs. R. ANDERSON & CO., 14 COCKSPUR STREET. A printed Scale of Charges may be obtained on application.

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And following Saturdays, at 2.30.—HAYMARKET.

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